

Strategic Brand Development and Market Entry Framework for WAFE

Positioning a Smart Garden Management System in a
Competitive Market Landscape

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Pond water in their blood, that is what Velda employees claim to have. Their passion encompasses everything pond related, having made pond products for over 50 years. When the company was first founded in 1969, it was only a small aquarium shop, but through the passions of F. Veldhuis it was quickly expanded to include production facilities under the name Velda B.V. (hereafter referred to as Velda). Nowadays, Velda is active in over 40 countries, ensuring biologically balanced and clear ponds across the globe. With their filters, pumps, fish foods, accessories, water treatments, pond plants, water test kits, and many more products, they have become one of the market leaders within the Benelux and a reputable pond company across Europe.

At present, Elgar Veldhuis son of F. Veldhuis and current CEO of Velda, has founded Roel Holding B.V. (hereafter Roel Holding) together with business partner and entrepreneur Roy Middelbos. Between the two of them, Veldhuis and Middelbos possess a lot of knowledge and experience, showed by the different enterprises they own (Fig. 1). This experience and knowledge of starting up and managing companies, provides faith that their new venture could also become a success.

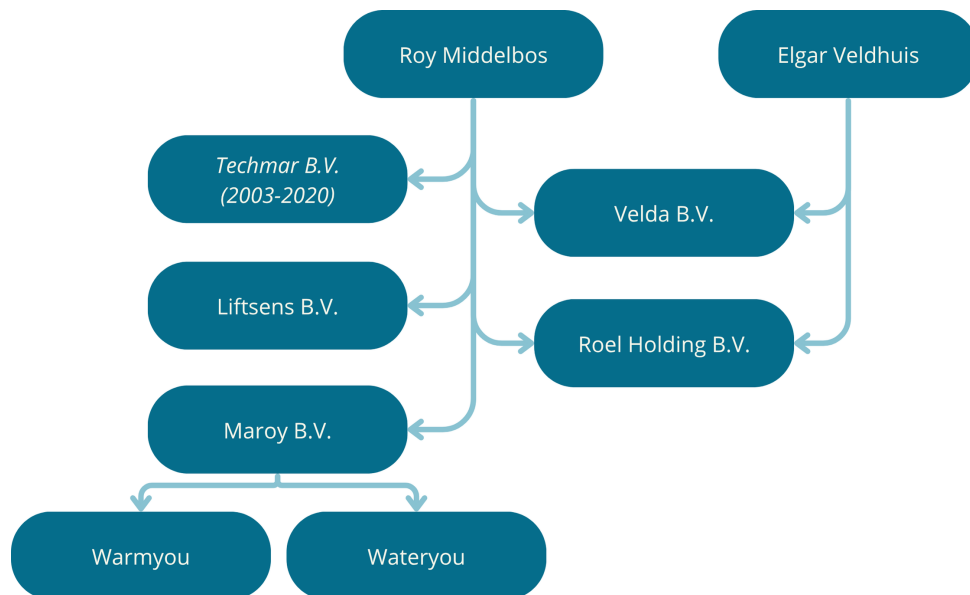


Fig. 1: The companies and knowledge shared under Middelbos and Veldhuis.

Trends like the rise of smart technology [1], a growing focus for sustainability [2], and shifting demographics shape the gardening and home automation industries [3]. An increasing number of consumers turns towards automated solutions to save time and effort. This shift is especially relevant as the aging population seeks more accessible solutions and as gardening gains popularity, with people treating their outdoor spaces as an extension of their homes [4].

Though the market for automated systems in gardens is already quite saturated, Veldhuis and Middelbos have designed something new (see Figure 2; a full-sized version is provided in Appendix A). A system that will be completely integrated and be able to manage anything connected to its low-voltage powerline network. Consumers will no longer need separate systems for irrigation, lighting, or managing their ponds, as this integrated ecosystem will cover all these aspects.

includes other products under its name, Middelbos and Veldhuis also plan to include the fact that WAFE refers to *Water, Air, Fire, Earth* in their marketing communications.

The system will use low voltage powerlines to transmit data and energy between the integrated products, bringing automation, sustainability, and innovation to the garden management market. With several unique selling points the concept of WAFE is promising, though the challenge of breaking into a competitive market dominated by well-established brands who enjoy strong customer loyalty will need to be faced. Building a clear strategy to navigate this competitive landscape and identifying ways to stand out will be key factors that will dictate WAFE's success.

1.2 Problem Analysis

To get WAFE's system onto the market it is important to understand all the factors and trends involved with its envisioned success and the proposed key questions. To understand the problems to be dealt with it is therefore vital to understand the cause and effects related to the proposed questions. To start, it is important to understand why and how the system came to be, what it exactly entails, and what has already been envisioned.

The intent of the WAFE's system is to fill a gap in the market where there does not yet exist a system that offers **the ability to connect, control and automate all different kinds of electrical products within one system**. Take for example irrigation, lighting or water management. Currently these three product groups would each require a separate system to automate them, where with WAFE they would all be integrated into one. There are also factors and trends that indicate that such a solution would benefit the market and population, perhaps even as a necessity to counter environmental changes and depleting resources.

Severe water scarcity is something that half the world's population needs to deal with at least once a year [5] (Figure 3). This fact stresses the need for smart irrigation to ensure efficient water usage and not use more than required. Studies have shown that several implementations of different smart solutions are more efficient than their manual and traditional counterparts. Remote Sensing (including satellite data, soil moisture, and other environmental variables) has the potential to save 7-50% of water usage, Evapotranspiration controllers (which use weather data to estimate irrigation requirements) save 20-71%, and Soil Moisture Sensors could increase water efficiency up to 20-92% [6].

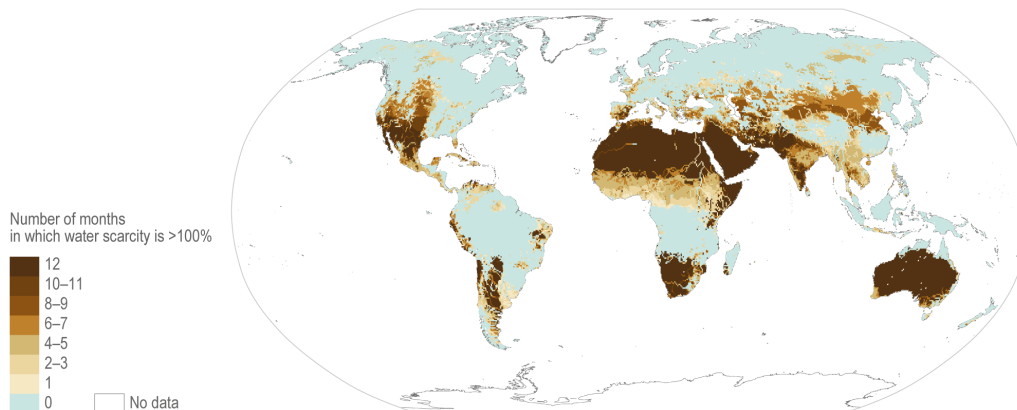
Other than a water crisis, a global energy crisis has also been present since 2021, following the economic rebound after the Covid pandemic and heightened by the Russian invasion in Ukraine [7]. Lighting takes up 19% of worldwide electricity consumption [8], which could potentially be reduced by 30% with the implementation of smart home technologies [9].

Not only because of resource shortage, but also because of customer preferences has water- and energy efficiency been a prominent factor in developing markets. Being environmentally active and sustainably conscious has become a trend amongst the population, with respect not only to climate, but also wellbeing, industry, and consumerism [10][11][12].

Other than these large-scale trends influencing the environment and population, there are also important trends that could influence WAFE's sales closer to home, in our own gardens. A post Covid pandemic trend to eat healthier and fresh foods has caused a trend of growing your own food [14][15]. This trend,

Geographical distributions of current water scarcity and levels of challenge for policies addressing future change

(a) Number of months per year with severe water scarcity



(b) Local levels of policy challenges for addressing water scarcity by 2050

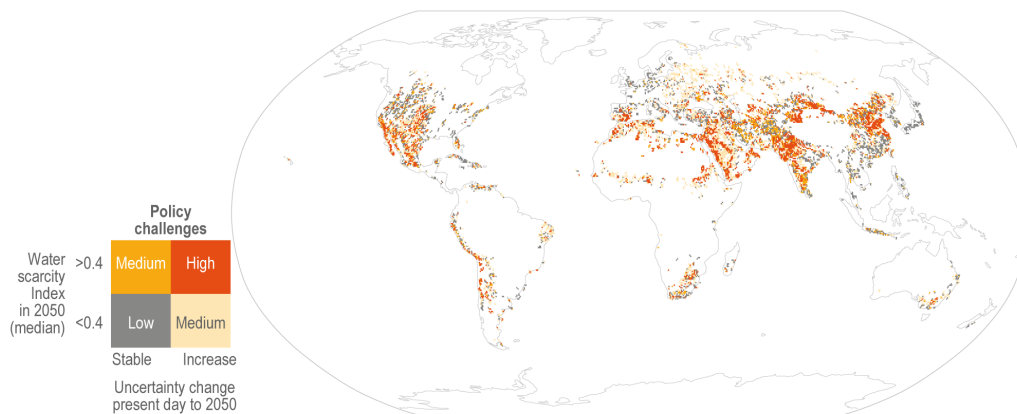


Fig. 3: Number of months per year of severe water scarcity as per the IPCC [13][5].

together with a trend for more decorative plants, takes space away from lawns and causes consumers to add beds to their gardens [14].

More gardening trends can be found in the areas of sustainability and environmentally friendly garden development, ecological gardens and garden experience, as well as the incorporation of technology and automation, leading to more low maintenance gardens [15]. In general, data and research show that popularity trends for cultivating greener gardens are present [16]. In the Netherlands, data even show that the number of online searches in ponds has been substantial, due to interest in water buffering and rainwater management [17].

To ensure WAFE will be able to navigate this context and assist in the challenge of entering the market, this thesis will focus on answering the following research key question and sub-questions:

How can WAFE position itself in the competitive landscape of smart garden management to achieve lasting market relevance and growth?

- *What key factors influence the adoption of a new brand like WAFE among customers and gardeners in a market dominated by established players?*
- *What strategic relationship should exist between WAFE and Velda, and how could this affect*

WAFE's identity and positioning?

- *What market conditions, challenges, and strategic options shape WAFE's opportunities for entry, differentiation, and long-term growth?*

1.3 Approach

All these trends together show definite interest and availability for an innovative, sustainable and resource-saving integrated system that takes away customers' worries and contributes positively to the ever-changing environment. This will also be further substantiated through a thorough market analysis including a consumer analysis survey amongst gardeners. Within the market analysis the focus will be on building a holistic image of the established market WAFE intends to enter. Through several analysis methods and frameworks focusing on the competitive landscape, a list of actionable insights has been formed during the course of this thesis that will be communicated to WAFE's founders as recommendations during establishment, as well as guidelines for the strategic vision and branding that have been formed.

After the initial market analysis, the difficulty of entering an already established market has been explained, as well as the power of branding and how branding could be the main strategy to overcome the barriers WAFE will face as new entrant, setting a theoretical basis for the eventual brand building.

Prior to the start of this thesis and during the initial research phases, it was not yet known what exact form WAFE would take, hence the sub-question as to what the strategic relationship between WAFE and Velda should be, which includes plans for WAFE's nature. As WAFE has been founded by members of Velda, the initial question was posed whether it should become some kind of subsidiary, or maybe even just a brand, or even simply as name for the system, under Velda and not a separate entity. Through research into different strategies, a strategic vision for WAFE was formed that classifies it as a strategic spin-off from Velda, that will grow to become structurally and strategically independent in time to facilitate growth, solid branding, and positioning. A roadmap for WAFE's long-term growth has also been created, making this strategic vision complete.

Eventually different branding strategies have been applied to build a solid, complete, and well thought out brand identity for WAFE, which has been presented into a complete brand manual which includes, but is not limited to, a visual identity, tone of voice, sociopolitical stance, and roadmap with long-term growth plan.

2 MARKET ANALYSIS

To fully understand the market and competitive environment in which WAFE would find itself after establishment, a comprehensive strategic view has been built addressing both internal capabilities and external forces. Different analysis methods have been used to build a holistic image of what WAFE could encounter in its prospective market.

For WAFE's situation as a yet to be established company, the market research has been performed in a competitor-oriented manner to gain a deep understanding of the competitive landscape that needs to be conquered, presenting a possibility for a comprehensive market entry strategy built from the outside in. The combination of all methods will allow for a conclusion in which the strategic differentiation of WAFE as opposed to the competitors is key, prepares WAFE to align with market demands and current gaps, and helps to already anticipate and pre-emptively adapt to likely competitor movements. The structure of this chapter, and all the methods that will be used, can be found in Figure 4.

The decision to adopt a competitor-oriented analysis approach is based on the fact that WAFE will enter an already established, highly competitive market with several strong incumbent players. In such contexts, it is important not only to understand the customer, but also to anticipate strategies, positioning, and weaknesses of competitors. Mason and Harris [18] argue that market orientation can vary significantly depending on environmental factors, and that different orientation methods must all be aligned with contextual drivers at macro, meso, and micro levels. In this context, *macro* describes industry level dynamics within the market, *meso* looks at strategies on firm-level, and *micro* tackles customer or segment specific needs. By analyzing the market using these different contextual drivers, a holistic understanding of the forces shaping WAFE's strategic opportunities and future market entry strategy can be shaped.

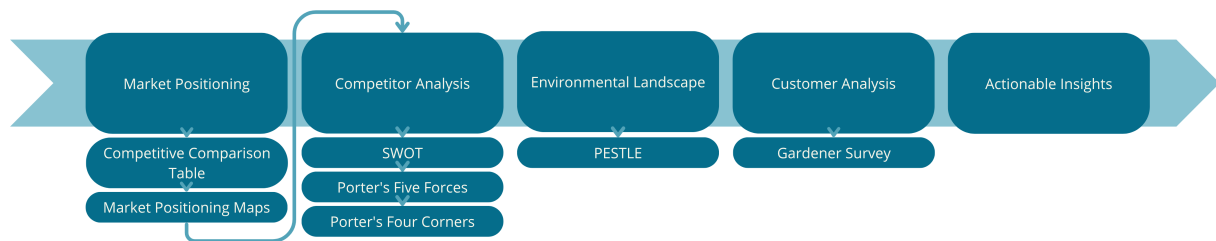


Fig. 4: Market Analysis structure.

2.1 Market Positioning

At the *meso* level, Market Positioning Maps and a Competitive Comparison Table have been used to reveal entry gaps in the competitive landscape [19]. The combination of these two methods allows for a reveal of whitespace in the market, helping WAFE determine where to position itself to fulfill unmet customer needs, and differentiate itself from the companies already occupying the more competitive and overcrowded areas of the market.

2.1.1 Competitive Comparison Table

The first step taken in determining how WAFE could differentiate itself from already existing companies and systems in a competitive market, was to determine the biggest competitors that WAFE would need to compete with for a market share. Therefore, a Competitive Comparison Table has been made to set apart the strengths and weaknesses of different companies. Companies from all different markets WAFE will

integrate into their system, and who offer a system or automated products themselves have been used for this table. Appendix B shows the automated products of each of these competitors, together with a full table describing their capabilities. Table 1 is an adapted version of the table in Appendix B, using ++, +, -, and - - to show a clearer overview of each of these brand's capabilities.

Feature	Pond Products				Lighting					Irrigation				Other	WAFE
	OASE	Aquaforte	Evolution Aqua	Aqua King	Auga	Paulmann	Philips Hue	In-Lite	Bega	Gardena	Rainbird	Solar aqua	Kärcher	Astral Pool	WAFE
Remote Control	++	--	-	-	--	+	++	+	++	++	++	+	+	++	++
Automation	++	--	++	++	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	+	+	++	++
Monitoring	++	--	--	--	--	--	++	--	-	+	++	-	-	++	++
Installation & Setup	-	++	-	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	--	+
Cost (per market)	--	+	-	+	++	+	-	-	--	+	-	++	++	--	-
Device Compatibility	+	-	-	--	++	--	++	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	++
Energy/ Water Efficiency	+	+	+	--	--	+	+	++	+	++	++	+	++	+	+
Ease of Use	-	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	-	+
Lighting Control	++	--	--	--	+	++	++	++	++	--	--	--	--	--	++
Filtration Management	++	--	++	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	++	++
Water Features	++	+	-	+	+	--	--	--	--	++	++	+	+	++	++
Oxygen/ Aeration Control	++	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	++	++
Scalability	++	-	-	--	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	++	+	++	++
Wi-Fi / Smart Home Integration	++	--	--	--	-	+	++	+	++	++	++	-	--	++	+
Local (Dutch)	-	++	--	++	++	-	++	++	-	-	--	-	-	--	++

Table 1: Simplified Competitive Comparison Table of the integrated competitive market WAFE will enter.

In this table a selection of companies with respective automatic products and systems has been chosen based on their functions similar to those that the WAFE system would need to perform. To build a basis for further research and decision making into the relationship between Velda and WAFE the group of pond and water management focused companies has been chosen to cover as much of the market as possible, where the companies located in different markets have been picked that are of interest, or pose threats, to WAFE, according to its founders.

From this table a few Unique Selling Points (USPs) could be derived, namely:

- WAFE will be the only integrated smart system that includes irrigation, lighting, and water management.
- The ecosystem itself will not require Wi-Fi and can therefore also function when the connection is down.
- The system will be fully compatible to products of other systems/brands through its special connectors.

- Adding new products to the system will be relatively easy, allowing future expansion possibilities.

2.1.2 Market Positioning Maps

To gain a better overview of the positioning in the competitive landscape and which gaps are present within this market, various Market Positioning Maps have been made (Figure 5-9). Various factors are taken into account, like level of automation, price, scalability, and quality. Within these maps a beige area has been drawn indicating the preferred positioning for WAFE.

In the first map (Figure 5) the efficiency of water and energy has been plotted against the compatibility of smart home systems (or smart products) of the companies from the Comparison Table. These two factors have been put together to determine whether there is any correlation between the two, whether there would be a market gap for a highly efficient system with (or without) smart home integration, and who the main competition would be depending on WAFE's placement. However, it can be seen that competition on this map is quite spread out and several highly efficient offers exist both with and without smart home compatibility.

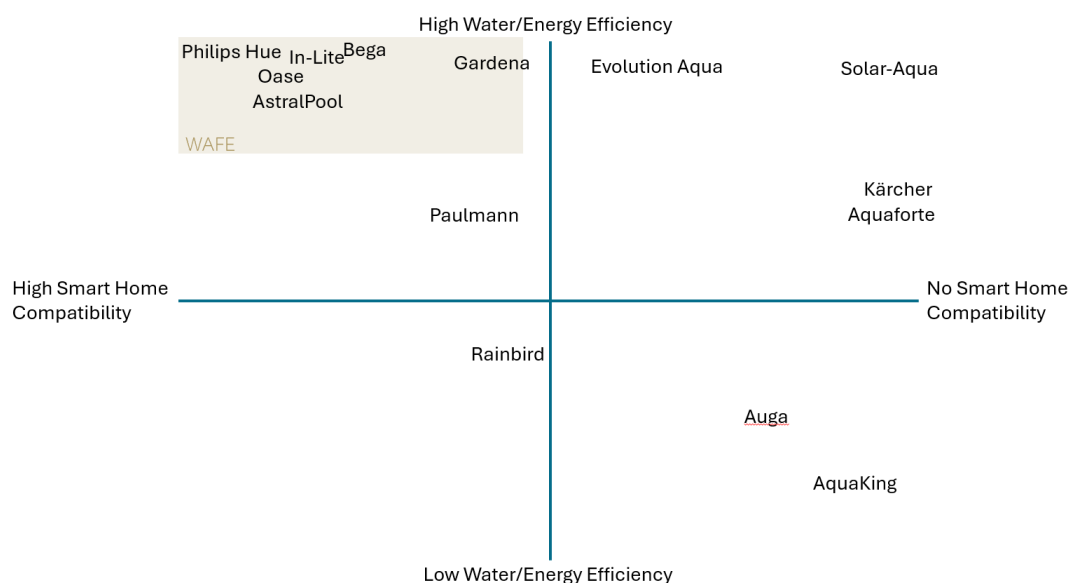


Fig. 5: Market Positioning Map 1, Smart Home Compatibility and Energy/Water Efficiency.

Figure 6, shows scalability and compatibility with the products offered on the market, is meant to give an overview of whether competitors allow their systems and setups to grow and how many product options are available to do so. Philips Hue, for example, has a highly scalable system and is also compatible with some products from other brands [20][21] and therefore scores high on both. It can also be seen that there is a line of correlation between the two axes, where the more scalable a system is, the more compatible it generally becomes. Therefore, it would be logical for WAFE, who, by integrating irrigation, lighting, and water management, becomes one of the most scalable systems, to also have a relatively high compatibility with other products.

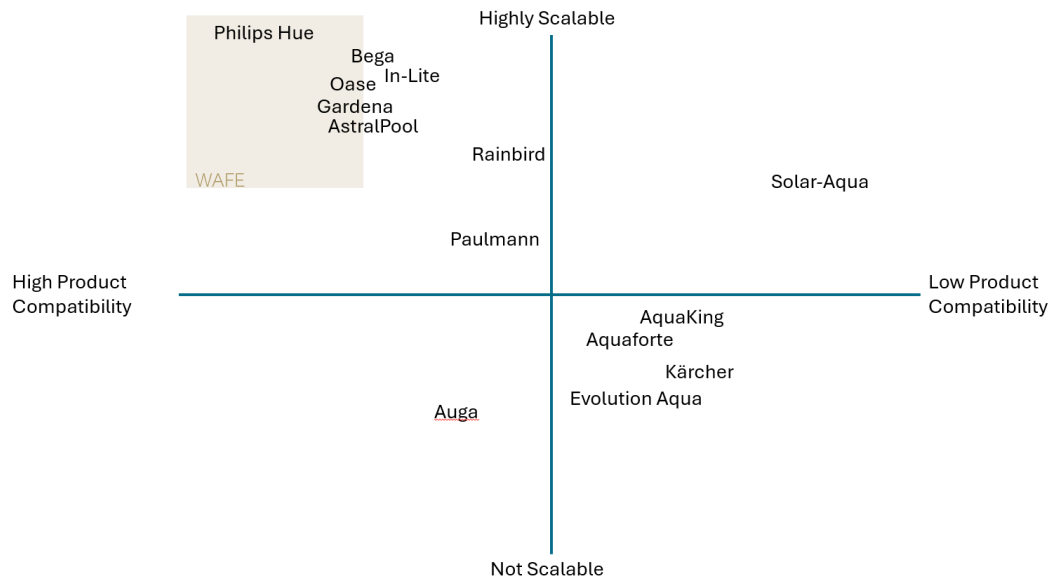


Fig. 6: Market Positioning Map 2, Product Compatibility and Scalability.

Next, an overview of user-friendliness and installation complexity was made (Figure 7). In this map, it can be seen that there is no real correlation between these two factors but that most companies do focus on offering user-friendly product options. For WAFE it would therefore also be advised to comply to this trend. As for installation complexity, which WAFE wants to be done by gardeners, it should not be too easy for end users to install the system themselves, though it should be possible for them to add new products to the system. Therefore the installation complexity of WAFE would ideally be placed in the middle of the scale when compared to competitors.

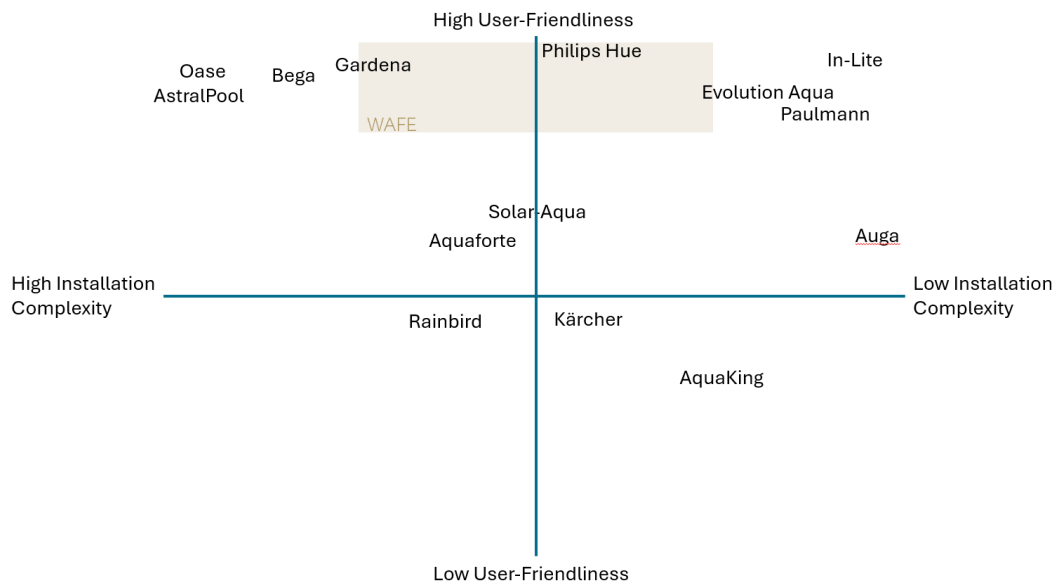


Fig. 7: Market Positioning Map 3, Installation Complexity and User-Friendliness.

The fourth map (Figure 8) depicts the classic correlation between price and quality, where a clear linear line can be seen showing the relation between the two aspects. For WAFE the most ideal position would be on the bottom left corner, where high quality and low price meet. Here a market gap can be found

which could be exploited. However, as can also be seen from the map, this is most likely not feasible and the recommendation for high quality would bring WAFE more towards a position in the top left quadrant.

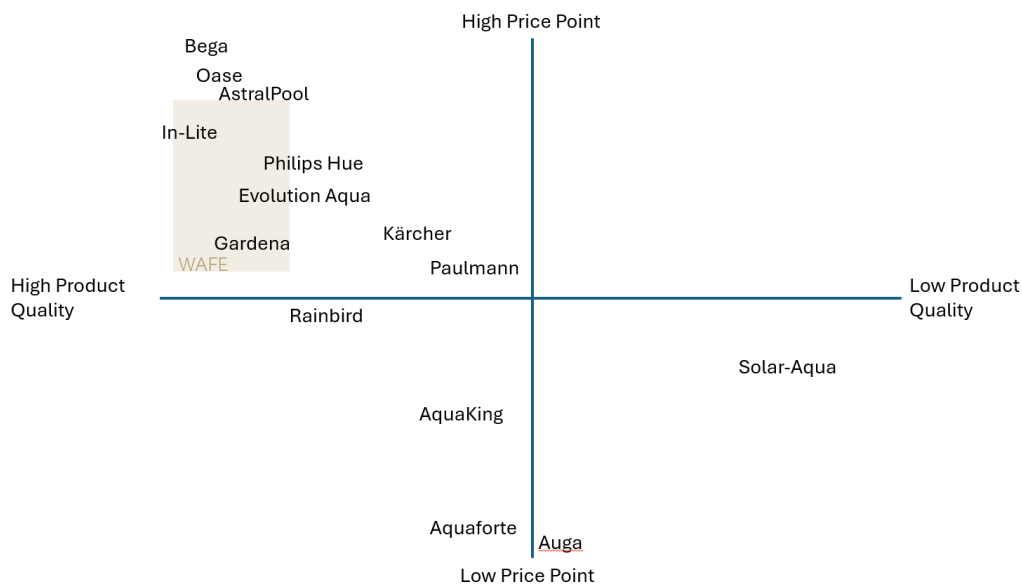


Fig. 8: Market Positioning Map 4, Price and Quality.

Lastly, automation and control have been plotted (Figure 9). This map was made with vision to determine whether complete remote control and automation go together, which, as can be seen, is not always the case. Though it may seem illogical to not adhere to the market gap for an automated but manually controllable system, the ideal position on this map would be in the competitive cluster of the top left quadrant when keeping in mind the system's eventual functions.

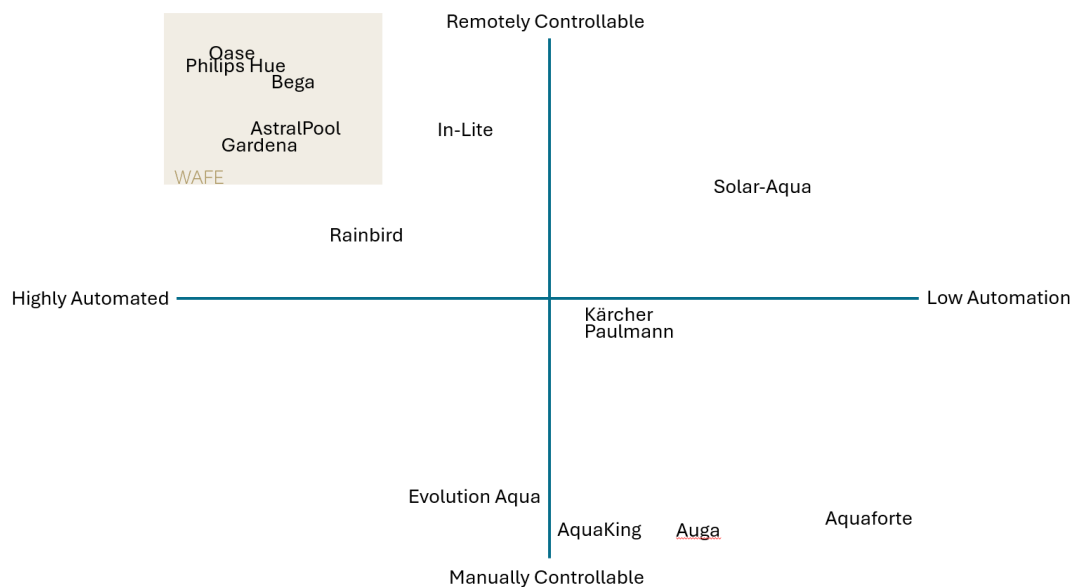


Fig. 9: Market Positioning Map 5, Automation and Control.

When looking at the positioning of WAFE compared to its competitors on the different maps, it can be seen that there are several competitors that share several similarities with WAFE with respect to their placement. Oase, Bega, Gardena, Philips Hue and Astralpool have therefore been determined as the main competitors for WAFE. As Astralpool is a company in the pool sector and not as much in garden management, it will be left out of this equation for now. Nevertheless, it will be recommended for WAFE to analyze this company if they ever intend to expand into the pool market. The other competitors, however, require further analysis for WAFE to learn from them and gain insights into how to compete with them for a market share. Another company that needs to be taken into account is In-Lite. This outdoor lighting company has a strong market presence and reputation. It was initially not included into the main competitors as it scored lower than BEGA and Philips Hue in the positioning maps, and it seemed unnecessary to include a third lighting competitor. However, from the survey that has executed among gardeners, and will further be discussed in Chapter 2.4, it was found that many of them would recommend this brand. Because of this, it has been decided that In-Lite is definitely an important competitor for WAFE to overcome in this market, and that it will become the fifth competitor to be analyzed.

2.2 Competitor Analysis

To gain a thorough understanding of the competitive environment surrounding WAFE within the industries it plans to occupy, a competitor-focused SWOT analysis, Porter's Five Forces, and Porter's Four Corners framework have been performed, further enhancing knowledge on the *meso* level market orientation, and starting on the external, *macro* level drivers. Analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the five major competitors, along with other industry forces, helps reveal the strategic pressures and opportunities present in the market, as well as the possible changes that could occur in the market after WAFE's establishment [22]. Porter's Five Forces evaluate supplier and buyer power, the threat of replacements and new entrants, and competitive rivalry, supporting SWOT the analyses by highlighting structural industry factors [23][24]. Together, these insights clarify potential areas for differentiation and provide a solid basis for strategic decisions aimed at strengthening WAFE's future market position. The complete SWOT analyses can be found in Appendix C, with a visualized version in Figures 10-13 accompanied by a small summary of each SWOT analysis. Figure 15 shows a visualization of the Five Forces framework to determine industry challenges, and Porter's Four Corners are used to identify competitor's motives, strategies, capabilities, and assumptions. This framework will allow WAFE to make anticipatory strategies to reactions competitors might have to WAFE as new entrant to the market, increasing competitive intelligence [25].

2.2.1 SWOT

From Oase's SWOT analysis (Figure 10), it becomes clear that they draw strength from their position as a high-quality and sustainable company, although facing challenges with regard to pricing and availability through distribution channels. Significant growth opportunities exist for them with regard to new markets and technological advancements, while several external factors pose threats that require strategic adaptation.



Fig. 10: SWOT Analysis Oase.

Philips Hue (Figure 11) uses its formidable reputation and innovative edge in smart lighting to stay ahead of the market, particularly through energy efficiency and smart home integration. However, it holds a higher price point than most direct competitors and is reliant on Wi-Fi connectivity. The growing demand for smart outdoor lighting presents significant growth opportunities, but intense competition and evolving industry standards require constant navigation while also needing to deal with increasing privacy concerns to stay ahead in the market.

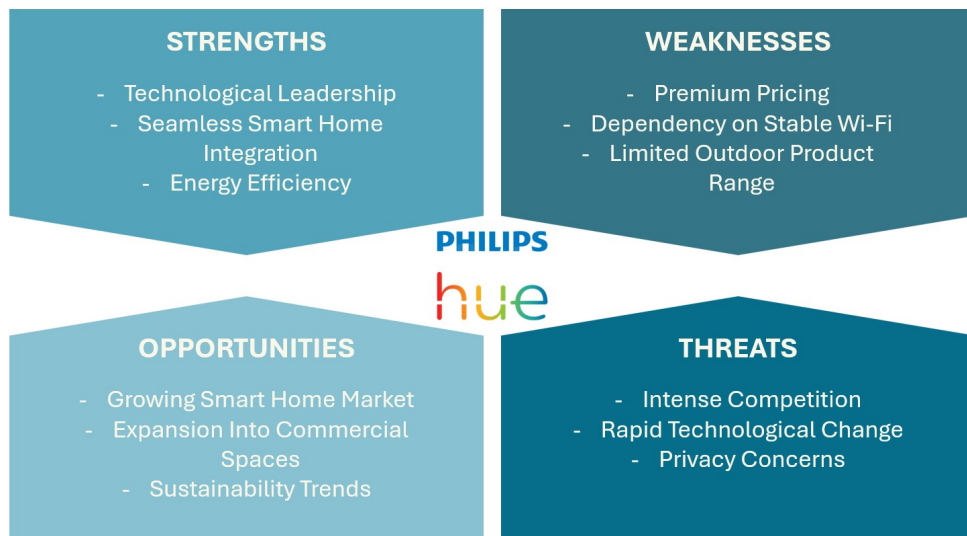


Fig. 11: SWOT Analysis Philips Hue.

Gardena's reputation (Figure 12) as a market leader in innovative and eco-friendly gardening solutions strengthens its market position, although this company also struggles with a high price point. Through the growing market trend for sustainable and smart products, Gardena can enhance its offerings. However, fierce competition still needs to be addressed, and several external factors could also impact sales.



Fig. 12: SWOT Analysis Gardena.

BEGA (Figure 13) takes advantage from its formidable brand reputation for high quality and innovative outdoor lighting solutions, though its premium pricing and niche market focus limit broader accessibility. Once again growing trends offer opportunities, as do emerging markets and smart technology integration. However, like other companies, it must navigate intense competition and economic challenges.

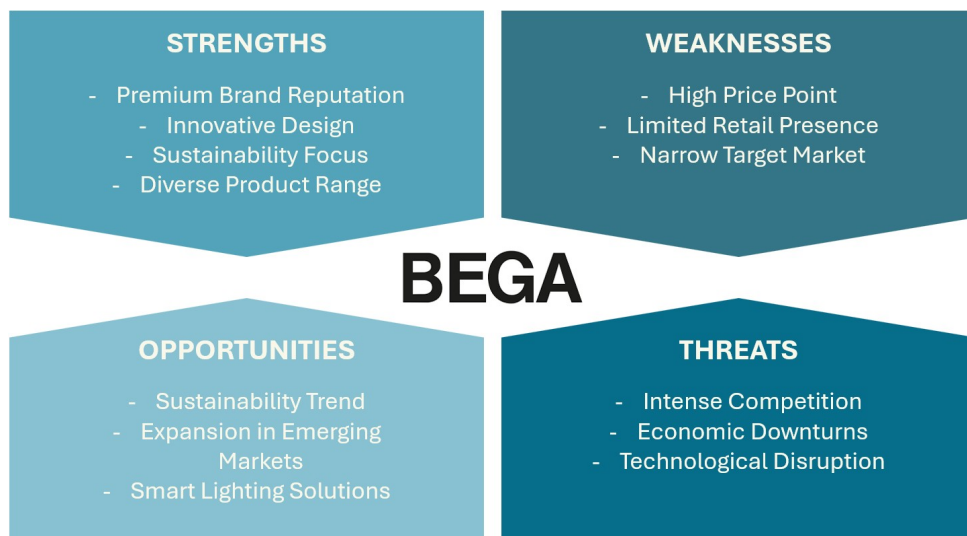


Fig. 13: SWOT Analysis BEGA.

Finally, In-Lite will be a dangerous competitor because of its strong market presence and trust among gardeners. It may be focused on a niche market and depend on outdoor living trends, but opportunities to expand and collaborate with landscape designers could make this brand even stronger. Once again, this competitor must face intense competition, technological advances, and economic downturns.



Fig. 14: SWOT Analysis In-Lite.

By looking at the established positions of these companies, as well as the gaps in their performances and alignments with emerging market trends, WAFE could strategically benefit. The key takeaways from these SWOT analyses for WAFE are as follows:

- Each competitor, especially Oase, Gardena, In-Lite and BEGA, has a formidable reputation for quality. To differentiate itself, WAFE could develop a hybrid product portfolio that balances high-quality offerings with streamlined options at a more accessible price point, appealing to both premium customers and cost-conscious consumers.
- Sustainability is a recurring strength across the competitors. An emphasis on environmental responsibility, such as energy efficiency and eco-friendly materials, would resonate well with the environmentally conscious market.
- With increasing demand for smart solutions, highlighted by all these main competitors, WAFE could focus on IoT-enabled, automated features for their system. This would not only meet current consumer trends, but also position them competitively in the smart home and garden market.
- Oase, In-Lite, and BEGA's focus on advanced, energy-efficient, and durable technologies shows that they assume consumers expect products that are technologically advanced with low maintenance. A similar focus on low energy consumption, durability, and ease of use by WAFE would appeal to both residential and commercial customers.
- Competitors like Oase and Gardena have significant market shares in Europe but limited reach in other regions, providing an opportunity for WAFE to target underserved markets in North America, Asia and Latin America, tapping into urbanization and growing interest in gardening and outdoor aesthetics.
- BEGA primarily targets premium, high-end markets, while Oase relies on niche retailers. Expanding product visibility in mainstream retail channels, such as home improvement stores, would increase WAFE's brand exposure and attract a broader customer base.
- Oase, BEGA, In-Lite and Gardena's success partly stems from a wide and diverse product range. If WAFE offers a comprehensive lineup, from water features and lighting to irrigation and landscap-

ing tools, it would create a one-stop-shop experience for customers, appealing to both residential and commercial markets.

- Gardena's dependence on seasonal sales indicates that broadening the product line to include products for all seasons or multifunctional use could help stabilize revenue year-round.
- With economic downturns and competition as common threats across these companies, developing flexible pricing strategies like entry-level product lines or financing options can make WAFE more accessible during economic slowdowns.
- Environmental regulations and technological disruptions are critical factors. Building an adaptive product development strategy, with a focus on sustainable materials and compliance-ready designs, would help WAFE stay resilient against regulatory pressures.
- With Philips Hue's noted challenges around privacy concerns, WAFE's focus on secure data handling and user-friendly privacy policies for any smart or IoT-enabled products would address potential customer concerns in an increasingly privacy-conscious market.

2.2.2 Porter's Five Forces

To gain even better understanding of the competitive environment in which WAFE will operate in the future, the Porter's Five Forces framework has been utilized to analyse the key factors that shape competition in WAFE's prospective industry. By combining the Five Forces with the SWOT analysis the goal is to approach and achieve guiding for eventual strategic decision making and market positioning.

The framework in Figure 15 has been used to evaluate the integrated sectors of irrigation, outdoor lighting, and water management to determine strategic positioning for WAFE when entering this market.



Fig. 15: The Five Forces framework as proposed by M. E. Porter [23].

Threat of New Entrants

When a new entrant enters a market, pressure increases on costs, prices, and the necessary rate on prices to compete. Especially new entrants who expand and diversify from another market, who already possess existing capabilities and stable cash flows they can leverage, can shake up competition [23]. According to Porter it is not whether a new entrant enters the market that holds down profitability, but the threat of entry itself. There are seven entry barriers that incumbent companies hold compared to new entrants. Below, these barriers have been listed with a short explanation as to how they influence WAFE:

- *Supply-side economies of scale*: A barrier created by large established companies that yield lower costs per unit through the ability to produce larger volumes of products. As a new brand, WAFE will likely make less profits in early stages.
- *Demand-side benefits of scale*: Reflects the fact that customers are more likely to buy a certain product if other buyers are also willing to buy from this company. The reputation and number of customers loyal to established brands, prevents buyers to switch to a new brand.
- *Customer switching costs*: Fixed costs that consumers undoubtedly need to pay when switching suppliers. For a consumer who already has an automated system in their garden, this would mean the costs of installing an entirely new system and throwing out the old.
- *Capital Requirements*: High initial investments are necessary for developing an integrated ecosystem covering irrigation, lighting, and water management. Such costs are substantial enough to discourage smaller or less-funded new entrants.
- *Incumbency advantages independent of size*: No matter size, established market players possess advantages regarding not only experience, but factors like favorable shop locations, ownership over technologies, or established brand identities.
- *Unequal access to Distribution Channels*: To reach the target market it is essential to establish partnerships with well-known retailers, creating a significant barrier to keep new companies out when they do not possess similar access. To become an established company WAFE will thus need to secure prime retail space and distribution channels. One way WAFE already intends to do this is through 'Toveniers.' These will be specially educated gardeners that promote and install WAFE products. By establishing relationships with these gardeners and using them to distribute WAFE's system, one such distribution channel will be secured.
- *Restrictive government policy*: Government policies possess the ability to both hinder or aid a new market entrant, while simultaneously being able to increase or decrease the power of the other entry barriers. Licensing requirements, foreign restrictions, or regulated industries largely affect the capabilities of new entrants.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Another force encompasses the power of suppliers, who have the potential to charge higher prices to their customers. Especially in competitive markets where industry occupants are unable to increase their product prices, do suppliers possess significant power. This is because companies will risk losing market share when increasing their prices too much. Factors that determine whether a supplier holds much power include:

- *Limited availability of specific components:* As WAFE will most likely be dependent on unique technological components like sensors and control systems, suppliers could hold this as an influence against them. However, this risk could be minimized by establishing exclusive supply agreements or strategic partnerships with key suppliers.
- *Strategic differentiation:* To provide more control over supply and potentially enhance product differentiation, WAFE could consider in-house development of key components. Especially when producing critical items like smart controllers and LED lighting systems this could be beneficial.

Bargaining Power of Buyers

Correspondingly, buyers could also have power over a company. When industry participants compete against each other, this can be instigated through the power of the buyer. The powerful buyer can negotiate leverage over companies by demanding lower prices, higher-quality products or better services, driving down industry compatibility. Negotiating leverage is possessed by the consumer in the case of:

- *Price sensitivity:* Consumers in the gardening industry are often price-conscious buyers, making competitive pricing essential for companies to retain a market share. However, if WAFE could build a reputation for quality and reliability, they could foster customer loyalty, even amongst cost-sensitive buyers.
- *Customization:* If users were able to set specific preferences in their systems, premium pricing could be better justified due to the added convenience and personalization options.

Threat of Substitute Products or Services

The fourth force is the threat for substitutes, which are products or services able of performing a similar or exact same function as the product developed in the industry, but in a different way or through different means.

- *Alternative technologies:* Substitutes in WAFE's situation are items like simple garden hoses and manual light switches. However, as the WAFE system is an integrated, automated, eco-friendly, and energy-efficient solution and is optimal for customers seeking time-saving and sustainable options, it can surpass these alternatives.
- *Competition from existing Ecosystems:* Systems from brands and competitors like the previously mentioned Philips Hue, Gardena, BEGA, and Oase, who deliver partial ecosystem solutions within the separate markets, can also be seen as substitutes. Nevertheless, none of these competitors offer a fully integrated ecosystem like WAFE offers, integrating lighting, irrigation, and water management. As a one-stop solution, this would serve as a unique selling point for WAFE and set it apart from its competitors.

Rivalry Among Existing Players

Lastly, there is rivalry among competitors. This force shows itself in lots of different actions performed by companies, like pricing discounts or advertisement campaigns. If an industry is highly competitive its profitability can be limited through this intense rivalry, especially if the rivalry is gravitated towards price and competitors drive each other's prizes down continuously.

- *Competitive advantage:* The WAFE ecosystem has the ability to distinguish itself by its unique single platform, appealing to customers who wish to automate their garden seamlessly and without multiple separate systems.
- *Rivalry:* Although a lot of competition exists from companies who are active in one of the industries that WAFE will combine in its system, no competitor currently offers such a combined solution. This gap provides WAFE with a unique position in the market.

In conclusion, this framework has helped build knowledge as to why WAFE's industry will be profitable, provide guidelines towards their own strengths and weaknesses, and guides towards strategic actions to be considered. Clarity has also been achieved on how each force shapes and influences the competitive landscape WAFE will need to adapt to.

2.2.3 Porter's Four Corners

When WAFE is established and tries to conquer a piece of the market, it does so as a new entrant. To predict reactive competitor behavior and further understand strategic positioning in the adapted environment, Porter's Four Corners Model has been applied [25]. In Appendix D the complete workout of the model can be found, with a summarized version in Figure 16-20.

In its niche Oase (Figure 16) has positioned itself as a market leader, specializing in high-quality pond and water management. Within this niche it has a comprehensive product ecosystem and their focus on eco-friendly solutions make them a strong competitor, especially since consumer demand in specialized water features continues to grow. Nevertheless, Oase's limited expansion beyond water features presents an opportunity for rivals like WAFE.

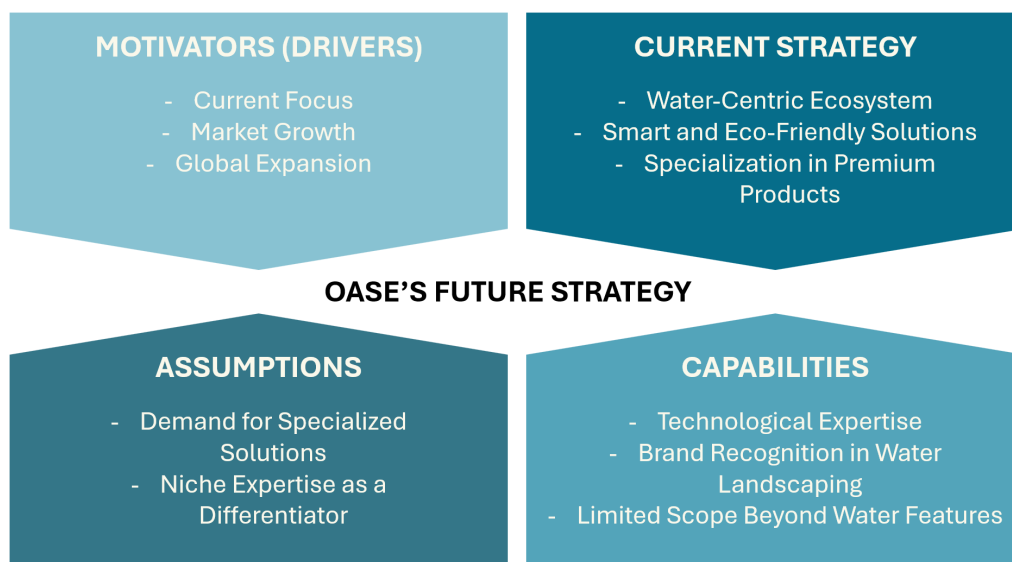


Fig. 16: Porter's Four Corners Model Oase.

Gardena (Figure 17) is a strong and dominant player in the irrigation market, also expanding into smart gardening solutions. Its expertise in smart irrigation systems and a diverse product range allow it to have a competitive edge on competitors. Gardena's strong brand reputation and technological innovations position it well against emerging competitors like WAFE in the smart gardening sector.

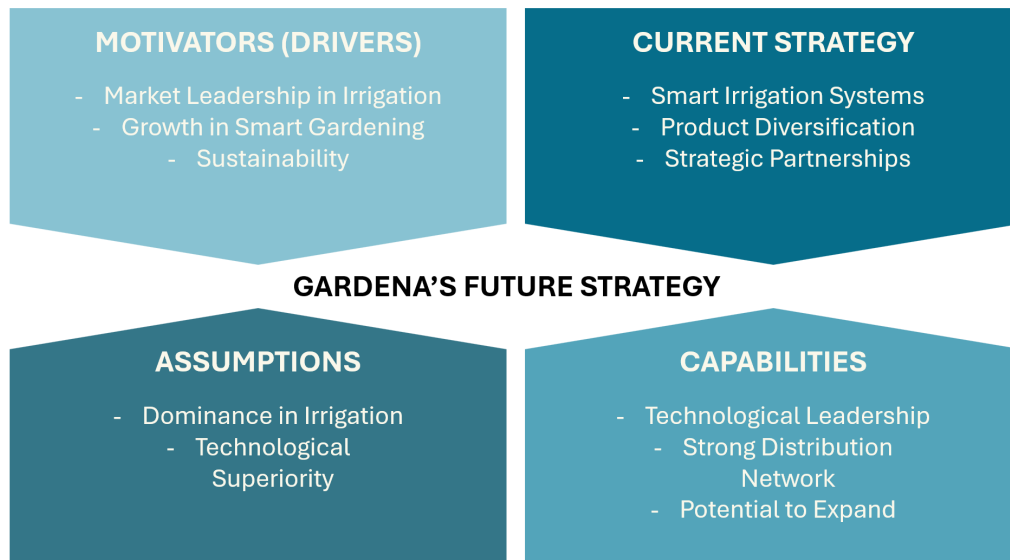


Fig. 17: Porter's Four Corners Model Gardena.

As a sub-brand of Philips, Philips Hue (Figure 18) aims to become a leader in smart lighting, including outdoor lighting, by integrating its products with smart home systems. Its brand recognition and strong technological capabilities make it a formidable competitor in the lighting industry. However, its narrow focus may limit its competitiveness against WAFE, who offers a broader garden management solution.

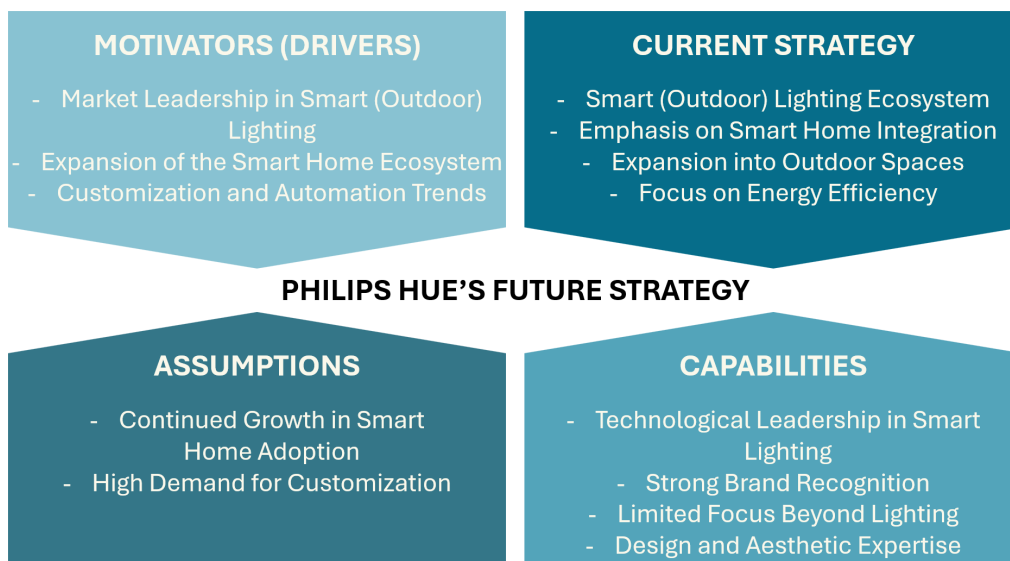


Fig. 18: Porter's Four Corners Model Philips Hue.

BEGA (Figure 19) is well known for its durable products as company focused more on high-end outdoor lighting in the architectural sector. While they are starting to incorporate smart technology, BEGA is limited in integration with smart home systems or possibilities to branch out to other markets, hindering competitiveness outside of its niche.

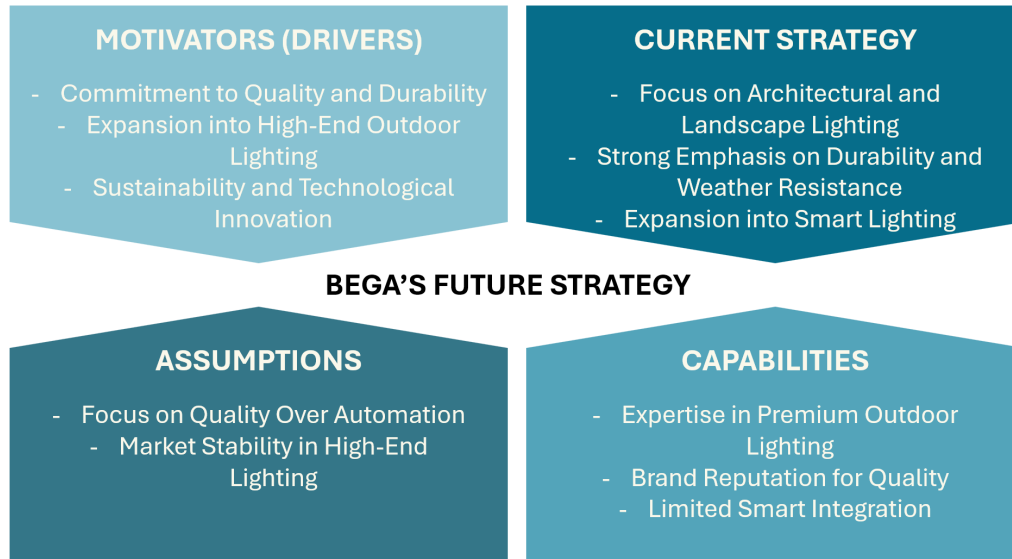


Fig. 19: Porter's Four Corners Model BEGA.

As a company with strong customer focus and sustainability commitment, In-Lite has managed to gain a significant market share through exclusive distribution channels. With the assumption that do-it-self gardening and outdoor living trends continue to grow, they will be able to leverage its excellent design and brand strength to grow even further.

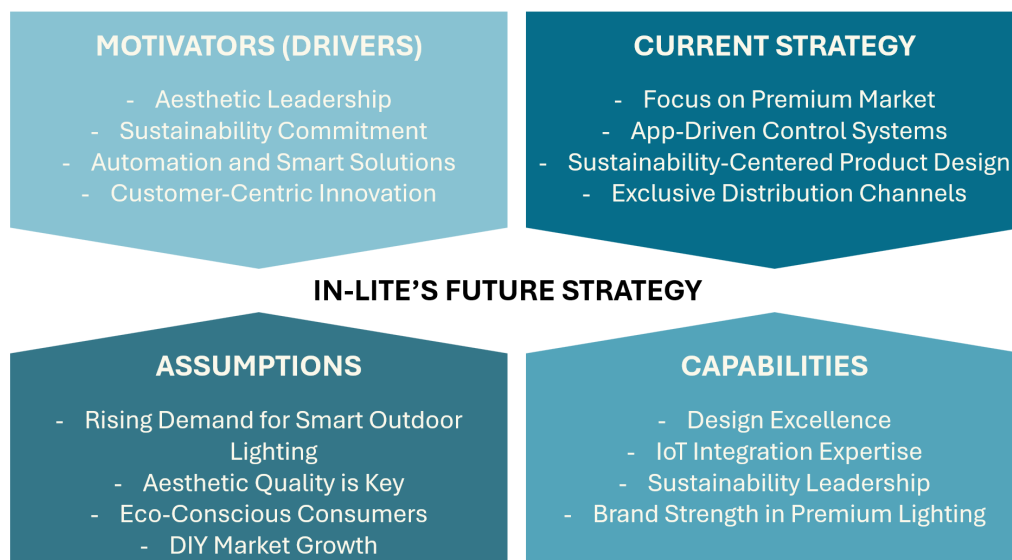


Fig. 20: Porter's Four Corners Model In-Lite.

There are a couple of key takeaways that can be derived from these models, highlighting competitive aspects that WAFE would face from these companies. These key factors will later be combined with

those from the other analyses and methods to derive strategic actions for WAFE.

- Each competitor holds a niche positioning, allowing them to have used their specialized focus to build a loyal customer base and reputations for quality.
- All five competitors leverage some level of smart and automated technologies, responding to consumer demands for convenience, eco-friendliness and control.
- Each company is a market leader within its niche, with strong brand loyalty stemming from consistent quality and specialization.
- The competitors are actively growing their product lines to capture related market segments and the use of ecosystems is growing.
- These competitors have set lofty standards for design, durability, and technical performance, leveraging technology within their specialties.

2.3 *Environmental Landscape*

Now that Porter's Five Forces have helped understand structure and intensity of the competition, it is important to determine which external factors may impact the competitive landscape and eventual strategic decisions WAFE would have to make. The PESTLE [26] analysis will help to determine these external *macro* environmental factors that involve the industry, helping to determine potential risks and opportunities in this landscape to align WAFE's strategies.

The PESTLE analysis allows organizations to examine external factors that could influence its business planning, as well as identify emerging, long-term trends. It can be applied in different areas and stages of business planning, namely:

- Strategic Planning, by offering insights into the external context that could influence brand positioning, growth ambitions, or strategic direction.
- Workforce Planning, by helping anticipate potential shifts in business models that could reshape employment trends.
- Marketing Strategy, as part of the context analysis, focused on providing essential environmental insights.
- Product and Service Innovation, by observing external developments to guide decisions about market behavior, including market entry.
- Management of Organisational Change, contextualizing changes within the organization.
- People-Focused Strategies and Research, by helping project future scenarios and areas for investigation through external scanning.

In general, this analysis offers a lot of possibilities for useful insights into WAFE's environment. In the context of this thesis, the model will mainly be used to influence market entry and determine strategic positioning, though it would definitely be useful for WAFE's management to revisit the PESTLE in future managerial decisions.

In applying the *PESTLE* analysis for WAFE the original template was used, which can be found in Appendix E. The model analyzes different environmental and external factors that can influence the brand, namely: Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors. As WAFE initially intends to enter the Dutch market, it is the Dutch environmental landscape that has been analyzed in this analysis. When WAFE expands its reach in the future, it might be interesting to redo the PESTLE and gain insights from these future environments.

With respect to the *Political* landscape, WAFE will find a favorable environment in the political climate of the Netherlands. As both the Netherlands and the European Union provide support for sustainability and innovation, opportunities arise for WAFE to leverage pro-innovation policies and tax incentives. Although regulations might be strict, if WAFE were to ensure product compliance, it could potentially benefit from different subsidies and green funding initiatives.

While the Dutch government supports innovation and sustainability, *Economic* volatility can affect consumer purchasing decisions. Inflation causes customers to spend less on unnecessary innovations, as WAFE's system could be considered to be. By appealing to both value-conscious and premium market segments, WAFE could try to limit the repercussions of these economic changes. Offering different product models in different price tiers could allow customers to buy WAFE even when they are not able to buy the most premium models. Value-driven product positioning could also influence consumers' perspective on the merit of the brand, enticing them to buy WAFE even in times of economic shortcomings.

With regards to the *Social* aspect of WAFE's environmental landscape, it can be said that growing trends and social interests, as described in the Introduction chapter of this thesis, align well with WAFE's vision. Trends regarding eco-conscious living, home gardening, smart automation, health-conscious gardening, DIY home improvement, solutions for the aging population, and many more, provide an opportunity for WAFE to tap into and connect with its audience. By prioritizing usability, accessibility, and modular customization WAFE could make sure to cover the needs from different customer segments and be relevant to multiple age groups.

Technological advancements and increasing acceptance of IoT and automation have the potential to boost the relevance of WAFE's integrated system. By leveraging the Matter protocol for smart compatibility and differentiating itself through in-house innovation, WAFE will be able to keep developing and stay relevant in an ever changing technological environment. Developments in automation and smart gardening shape the market, and broader markets are reached with the incorporation of e-commerce. WAFE would implement this by investing in research and development, designing user-centric products, and maintaining its compatibility with other smart systems.

Legal market implications are factors that no company will be able to avoid. Compliance with European labor laws, product safety regulations, and environmental agreements is a complex and non-negotiable factor in each company's environmental context. This legal factor presents risks for WAFE, as potential missteps could harm brand trust and lead to penalties. Because of this it is important for WAFE to ensure strict regulatory compliance and invest in certifications and testing to ensure products are up to standard.

Lastly, the *Environmental* influence of WAFE's landscape is related to climate changes, and resulting changes in the consumer demand for sustainable products. With WAFE's energy- and water-efficient

system, it can be positioned as an eco-friendly brand which will increase relevance within the market. WAFE could integrate green materials, emphasize resource efficiency, and highlight environmental benefits in branding and marketing to connect with consumer preferences and global concerns.

In general, the PESTLE analysis confirms that the macro-environmental conditions for WAFE are quite favorable. There are however a few takeaways to keep in mind:

- Eco-friendly and sustainable practices overlap several of the PESTLE factors and are thus significant in this environmental landscape and within consumer expectations. For WAFE to stay competitive it would need to comply with several trends and regulations, embrace technological innovations, and leverage online sales channels.
- Sustainability is a top priority for consumers in the Netherlands and the rest of Western Europe. Environmentally conscious customers are increasingly looking for sustainable products, and strict environmental regulations reinforce this demand.
- Factors like emerging technologies, automation, and digital marketing reshape the marketing industry. To maintain a competitive edge it is important to stay up-to-date.
- Economic factors like inflation, costs of living and interest rates impact consumer spending. Offering value-driven designs that align with varying economic conditions will help appeal to both cost-conscious and premium customers.
- Home gardening interests have increased through trends about health consciousness and self sufficiency. Ever since the pandemic consumers are increasingly looking for ways to grow their own food or create relaxing outdoor spaces, which aligns well with products like irrigation systems and organic garden supplies.
- It is crucial to comply with national and EU environmental regulations. Non-compliance could lead to fines, legal complications and damage to the company's reputation.
- Cultural norms in the Netherlands and the rest of Western Europe favor eco-friendly, health-conscious and aesthetically pleasing garden solutions. Additionally, the aging population represents a segment that may require easy-to-use products.
- Climate change is affecting the gardening industry, with increased interest in water-efficient products and garden solutions that can withstand extreme weather conditions. A product line that addresses these concerns will meet consumer demand and future-proof the business.
- Digital marketing and e-commerce are increasingly important in reaching a broader consumer base, particularly as online shopping becomes more common.

2.4 Customer Analysis

Now that the *meso* and *macro* environments of the market have been analyzed, a comprehensive overview of the challenges WAFE will face in the market has been made. However, the market itself will not be the only influence defining WAFE's success. On *micro* level, customer preferences, perceptions, and behavior will also influence WAFE's market entry process.

WAFE's direct customers will be specially instructed gardeners, called Toveniers, who will recommend the brand to the end user. Therefore, it will be of great importance that gardeners are convinced to adopt the WAFE brand in their offerings. To gain some insights into gardeners' thoughts on different aspects of WAFE, a survey has been made and sent to as many gardeners as possible, both in the Netherlands and just across the border in Germany. At the moment this survey was sent, Jelte Overzet who did his bachelor's assignment on the WAFE pole was also busy with his customer research, and it was decided to collaborate while sending this survey as not to overwhelm the gardeners with two different but similar surveys close together. Because of this, some of the questions in the survey did not have much influence on this thesis, as they held more application to his research. The most important findings and implications for this thesis will be discussed below, and the full outcome of the survey will be shown in Appendix F.

The survey starts with questions to inquire about the kind of gardeners who have filled in the survey, questions about company structure, specializations, locations, and tasks they tend to execute while working. These questions were included to determine whether different kinds of gardeners, with different demographics and different contexts, had participated and whether the results would therefore be wide and inclusive enough.

The survey was sent out to over 1000 gardeners and received 19 responses, 18 Dutch and one German. Germans close to the border were included as WAFE is located in Enschede and will likely also provide services in Germany soon after establishment. The single German response was therefore used as a control factor to determine whether their answer would defer much from those of the Dutch gardeners. As shown in Figure 21, the gardeners who participated in the survey come from all over the country, are of different company structures, and mostly do all-round gardening work.

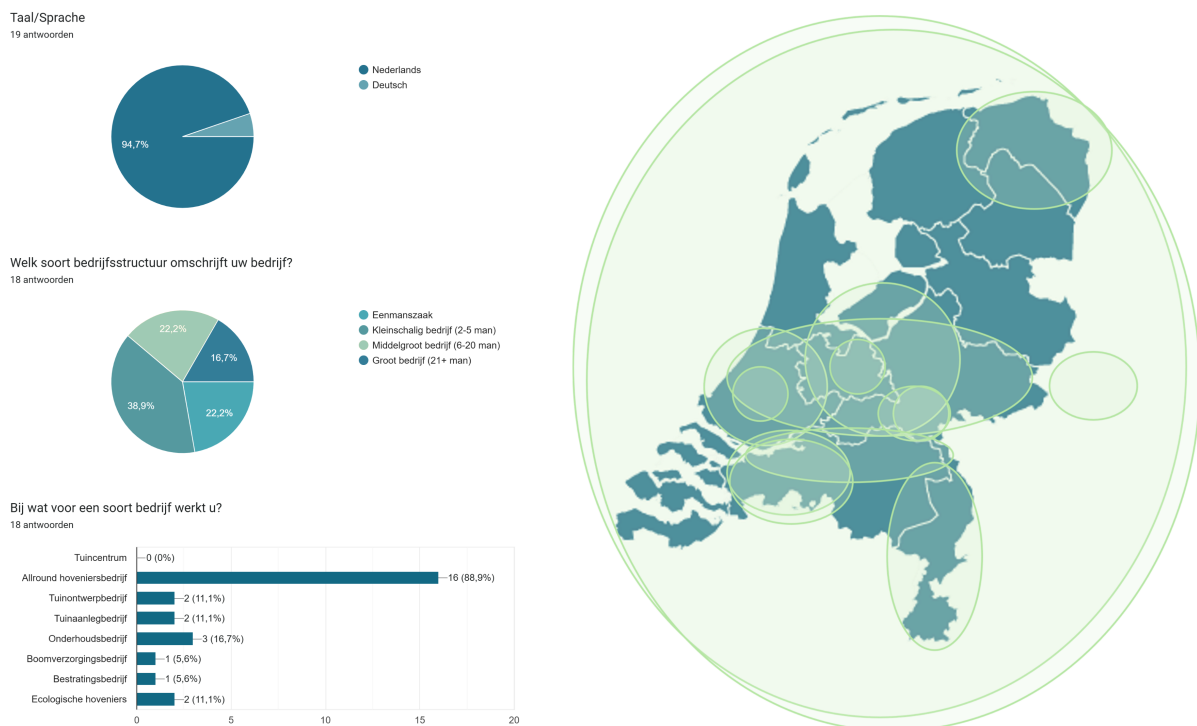


Fig. 21: Background information on survey participants.

Then, followed a few questions about the regularity in which gardeners deal with smart products during their jobs. Most gardeners (83,3 percent) already work with smart garden products or systems and mention that demand keeps rising. So far, installing automated lighting, irrigation systems, and robot lawnmowers seem to be the main tasks the gardeners need to execute regarding smart innovations.

Next, the gardeners were asked a few questions about the brands they currently use and their loyalty towards those brands. These questions have the biggest influence on this thesis, as the loyalty of the gardeners towards these brands will be one of the barriers WAFE will need to overcome when trying to conquer a market share.

With regards to brands the gardeners prefer and tend to recommend to their customers, In-Lite is by far mentioned most often. This lighting company offers 12 volt low voltage garden lights that can be controlled through their application. Because the gardeners appear to be quite positive about this brand it can be considered as one of the main competitors to beat to convince the gardeners to switch to WAFE. As earlier already explained, this is the reason In-Lite has been included in the previously executed competitor analysis.

Other than In-Lite, Husqvarna is the second most mentioned brand. However, this is regarding their robot lawnmower and therefore not of interest as a main competitor for WAFE as of today. In the future, if WAFE designs their own product lines and wants to add lawnmowers to its portfolio, Husqvarna can be considered an important competitor.

For this thesis, an important question in the survey was about whether gardeners were loyal to their current brands and why. Most responded that they are, but that they would be willing to consider switching if a new brand enters the market that offers better, higher quality products. Some mention that price would also play a role, but the majority only mentions quality as a deciding factor. This information gives clear direction to WAFE with regards to winning over these gardeners. For WAFE to focus on high quality above price.

On the question whether the gardeners would be interested in a potential system that integrates irrigation, water management, and lighting, many responded a bit skeptical. The concept of an integrative system that can be controlled through a single application seems interesting, as the current, separate, systems and apps have trouble working together. Others mention a "first see and then believe" approach, and mention that there have been systems in the past that came and went, and that they will not switch easily. It is also mentioned that some people do not care for water management, or might not be interested in irrigation, and that it should be possible to customize the system to include or exclude certain aspects. All these answers show that WAFE will need to prove the viability of its system. It needs to be able to demonstrate to the gardeners that it is possible to have an integrative system that works, is user-friendly, of good quality, and is completely modifiable to the user's requirements.

Qualities and functionalities gardeners find important, and which could help WAFE convince them of its capabilities, are mainly focused around ease-of-use, user friendliness, functionality, and easy installation. Things that were mentioned less often, but might still be interesting for WAFE, include; privacy, limited use of plastic, not prone to malfunctions, biological and climate neutral, and usage of rainwater.

Lastly, the gardeners were asked what price they would find logical to ask for such a system. However, answers to this question were widely varied (Figure 22). Some also mentioned that this would be dependent on the size of the garden and whether the customer wants the best and newest available

products, which of course are important factors that will influence the overall price of such a system. What can be seen is that the majority favors a price between 250 and 1000 euros. This is still a really big price range, but combined with knowledge about what competitors ask, price ranges for WAFE could be derived.

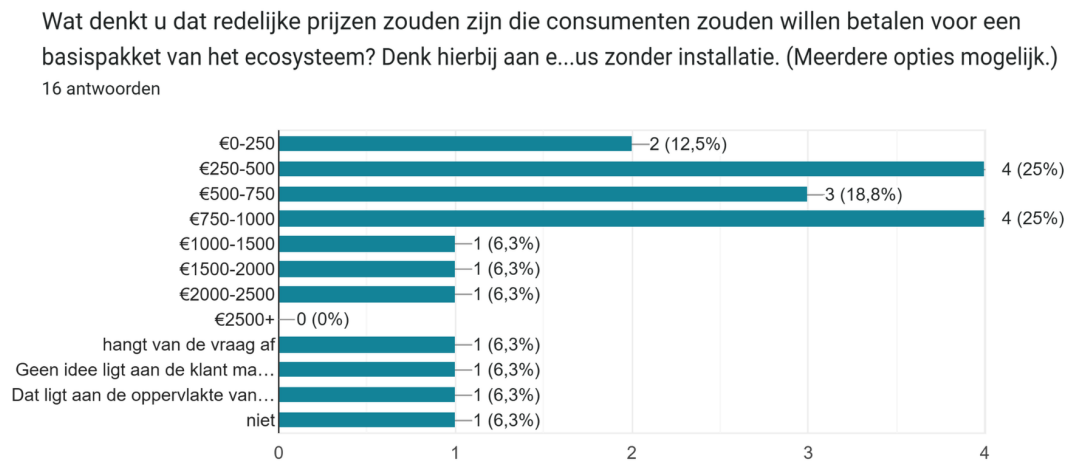


Fig. 22: Survey Result, how Gardeners would price WAFE's system.

The results from the German survey differ not much from the Dutch one. The German version mainly puts focus on the fact that German gardens are on average larger than those in The Netherlands. For WAFE to enter the German market it would therefore be important to consider how this will impact the price.

2.5 Actionable Insights

Based on the combined analyses, methods, and frameworks, and considering the key takeaways from the *macro*, *meso*, and *micro* level orientation strategies, a set of strategic recommendations can be formulated regarding WAFE's positioning, market penetration, and proposed actions. To summarize all findings into clear directions for WAFE to follow, the outcomes of all the methods in the market analysis have been entered in Chat-GPT. This AI model was then asked to summarize these key-takeaways into a list of actionable recommendations for WAFE (Appendix G.1). Below, the list that has been comprised by this AI model can be found. A table with the same actionable insights, but with comments and origins included for more thorough explanations can be found in Appendix G.2. The origins of each recommendation have been included to show which model/framework each insight comes from, and which outcomes have been combined into one overarching insight. At the request of WAFE's founders, this list has also been translated into more concrete and manageable actions to be completed (Appendix H). In this list each strategic recommendation has been split into several smaller actions to make it easier for WAFE to follow and implement these recommendations. Competitors have been used as examples to make the actions in Appendix H even more concrete.

The strategic recommendations that conclude the market analysis part of this thesis include:

- Develop a tiered/hybrid product portfolio to serve both premium and cost-sensitive segments.

- Focus on eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and IoT integrated technology across all products, while ensuring user-friendly interfaces.
- Secure and expand distribution channels to emerging markets and accessible retail outlets.
- Build stronger supplier relationships and invest in in-house capabilities.
- Develop a customizable, integrated ecosystem with continuous innovation to attract premium buyers.
- Establish WAFE as an early and differentiated brand in the integrated garden management market.
- Demonstrate reliability, ease of use, and quality to quickly establish brand credibility.
- Prioritize technical expertise in water management, lighting, and irrigation for a high-quality standard.
- Offer products designed for ergonomic use and accessibility.
- Highlight eco-certifications, sustainability, and health benefits in marketing efforts, and appeal to corresponding lifestyle trends.
- Strengthen e-commerce and digital presence to reach broader customer segments.
- Adapt strategies to economic changes and maintain affordable options.
- Integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, including partnerships with community gardening and environmental programs.
- Continuously focus on research and development, while establishing a roadmap for frequent updates and new features.
- Emphasize time-saving, eco-friendliness, and full automated garden integration.
- Introduce a modular pricing strategy with tiered options: Basic (€250–€400), Standard (€600–€750), and Premium (€900–€1200). (These prices are only an indication based on the performed research, in reality these prices would differ based on different factors like garden size and number of modules the user wants to add to the pole. This price only gives an indication to the price the pole and network could be, without any installation costs by the Tovenier or external products.)
- Emphasize value over low price by highlighting high quality, ease of use, and installer friendliness.
- Avoid positioning solely in the low-cost segment to protect perceived brand value and ensure sustainable margins.

3 BRANDING FOR MARKET PENETRATION

As has been mentioned while discussing Porter's Five Forces [23], entering a mature market means facing several barriers created by the established players. It is both a cultural and psychological undertaking. Incumbent brands often enjoy entrenched customer loyalty, network advantages, and economies of scale, making it difficult for new entrants to gain visibility and trust. These incumbents are not simply options for the customer, they are relationships, memories, and habitual choices. In such an environment branding is no longer just an accessory, it becomes the strategy. Branding operates at the intersection of cognition and emotion, translating product functionality into identity and purpose. Traditional marketing strategies often emphasize pricing, innovation and operational advantages, but this is no longer enough. Brands have become crucial elements of symbolism that influence consumers, this is because they have become something akin to relationship partners [27]. To succeed, WAFE should therefore offer not only great value, but also meaning.

This chapter will explore the challenges WAFE will face when entering the established market of automated garden management, and how branding will serve as a strategy to overcome these challenges.

3.1 *Challenges of Entering an Established Market*

Established markets possess internal structures, symbiotic relationships, and entry barriers that are not just physical or financial, but psychological. *Consumer loyalty* has already been formed after years of trust and repeated interaction. Fournier's [27] work highlights that *consumers develop emotional bonds with brands*, which can even be compared to friendships or romantic relationships. This poses as a significant barrier for a consumer to switch to a new brand. No longer are the switching costs solely monetary, they are now also emotional.

This is however not the only barrier WAFE will face when entering the market, as there are more interrelated challenges posed by the already established players.

Another challenge are the barriers of entry formed by *economies of scale* and *network connections* formed by the already established brands [24]. These brands often possess a wide distribution network, optimized supply chains, and longstanding reputations for reliability. This could diminish the perceived value of a new competitor even further [23]. *Brand credibility*, comprised from consistency, trustworthiness and expertise, acts as a powerful signal in reducing perceived risks by the customer, particularly in high-involvement categories [28] or B2B purchases.

In B2B settings, challenges can be intensified even further through the rational and trust-based nature of the transactions. Businesses are already more likely to have formed *strong bonds and partnerships with competitors*. In these contexts, branding is not simply about broadcasting messages; it is about embedding oneself into a web of relationships where trust, shared meaning, and co-creation define legitimacy [29]. *Trust and shared narratives* play a crucial role, making it harder for newcomers without established relationships to gain credibility, they need to make sure they are seen as a credible participant in a preexisting dialogue.

To make matters even more complex, the modern consumer is not passive. Mature markets have a lot of noise and information overload, and its audience will have developed *sophisticated filters* to judge sincerity of actions, promises, and intentions. New brands must not only differentiate themselves from the competition, but also ensure they capture the consumer's attention amidst an over-full media and

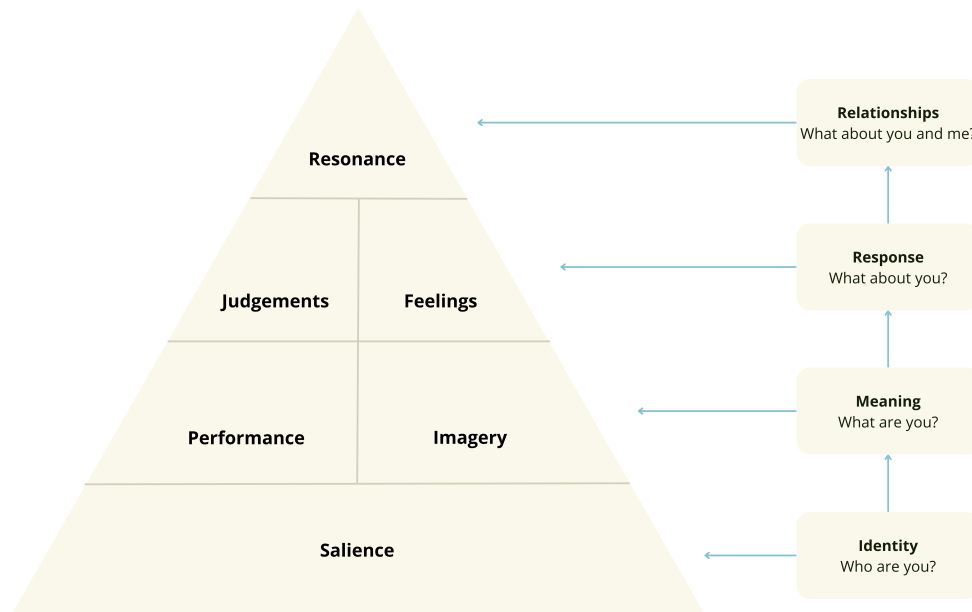


Fig. 23: Keller's CBBE model [31].

marketing landscape. To achieve this, brands must be sure to convey clarity, resonance, and emotional immediacy. Merlo et al. [30] discuss that the use of brand archetypes offers a heuristic method for consumers to quickly categorize and relate to a brand, making it easier for them to overcome potential cognitive barriers in initial brand encounters and relate to a brand immediately.

3.2 The Power of Branding

Considering these challenges, differentiation from the competition will simply not be enough and solid branding would be required to show WAFE's relevance. The strategic role of branding lies in its ability to structure perception, guide emotional responses, and create symbolic meaning. Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model [31] (Figure 23) breaks this down into four stages: building salience, shaping performance and imagery, fostering judgment and feelings, and achieving resonance.

To accelerate trust and foster loyalty within the target audience, brands can also be humanized. Aaker [32] introduces the concept of brand personalities where, just as people gravitate towards individuals with specific traits, consumers will connect with brands that project sincerity, competence, excitement, or sophistication. Merlo et al. [30] extend on this idea with the principle of archetypes. These symbolic figures allow brands to tap into collective unconscious narratives, which makes their identity easier to grasp. Each archetype embodies certain traits that can push through the inertia of loyalty consumers might have for established players. They work as cognitive shortcuts to understanding a brand's identity and values.

Yet, branding is not only an external projection. Through Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism [33], as shown in Figure 24, a brand will be able to align its internal culture with external image, creating a coherent and strong brand identity. In turn, this coherence will foster authenticity, which is essential in a critical and skeptical established market. To use this model, one has to fill in all the identity facets of their brand, thus creating a holistic overview of its identity. How exactly this table can be applied can be seen in Chapter 5.2.1.

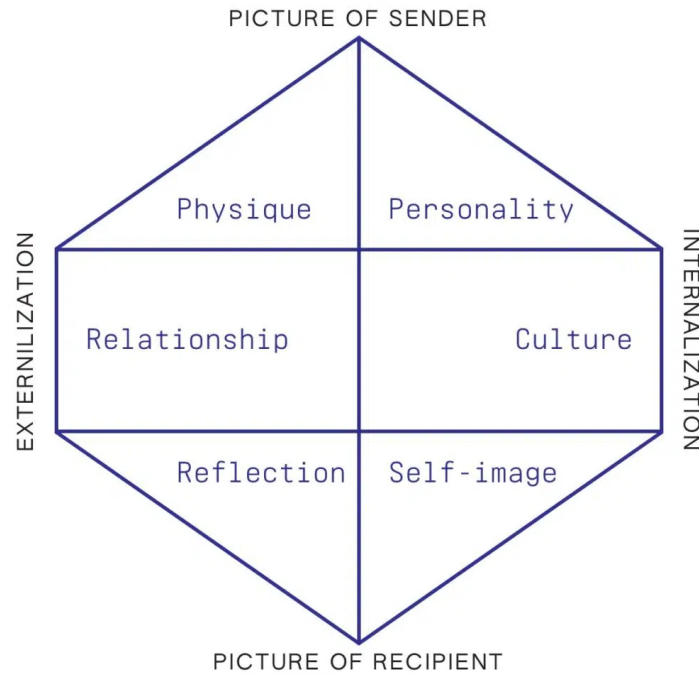


Fig. 24: Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism [33].

Furthermore, branding can mitigate risks. As Erdem and Swait [28] argue, brands serve as signals of quality, intent, and value in uncertain environments. For a new player without a track record, like WAFE, a clearly articulated brand can function as a substitute for history, increasing trust and credibility.

Finally, branding invites participation. According to Mäläskäet al., brand meaning is increasingly shaped through stakeholder interactions [29]. New entrants must therefore build brands not just for their stakeholders, but together with them. This participatory approach enhances relevance and fosters early loyalty.

3.3 *Branding as Strategy*

Several traditional market entry strategies include cost leadership, innovation, and partnership-based models. While each has merit, they lack the emotional and symbolic power that is needed to overcome the previously described barriers and switching costs in already established markets.

Porter [23] warns that within established markets; cost leadership may offer short-term traction but is often not sustainable for new entrants lacking economies of scale. Innovation-driven entry is effective when the product is radically different from current market offerings, but it still requires a compelling narrative to translate features into benefits. Branding provides that narrative framework according to Kotler and Keller, turning product features and benefits into emotionally resonant propositions and consumer-centric meanings [34][35]. This translation is the domain of branding.

Partnerships or acquisitions could offer a new entrant market access but may dilute the brand identity or create internal conflict in the process. It also poses a risk of loss of brand authenticity. Mäläslä et al. caution that misaligned alliances have the potential to confuse stakeholders and even erode trust [29].

External actors can dominate brand narratives, or branding efforts could suffer from mismatched brand personalities and strategic objectives. Without a strong brand identity as an anchor, WAFE’s potential future collaborative strategies, could therefore risk becoming incoherent.

In contrast, a strong branding strategy integrates emotional, symbolic, and functional values into a cohesive whole. Keller [35], Aaker [32], and Kapferer [33] all stress the importance of a coherent brand identity for sustaining a competitive advantage. Branding can therefore be considered not as a surface layer necessity, but as a structural foundation. Kapferer’s Brand Identity Prism, for instance, offers a comprehensive model for aligning internal vision with external perception and ensures consistency across all touchpoints. Which, when executed well, creates recognition, trust, and a sense of belonging within a brand. This can also be seen from a different viewpoint. As Österle et al. [36] illustrate with their concept of “brand worlds,” branding creates immersive ecosystems where users feel part of something bigger. It is not just about the product or service a company offers, but an entire brand experience.

Schmidt et al. [37] push this boundary even further by exploring brands as sociopolitical actors. Brands that align with values like sustainability, diversity, or fairness, can even become platforms for identity expression. For mission-driven companies, this is an especially potent strategy to connect with their consumer base.

3.4 Implications for WAFE

For WAFE, the insights from this chapter are more than just theoretical, they can be applied operationally. While in Chapter 5 these theories will be implemented, here the theoretical implications will be discussed beforehand. The focus of WAFE’s branding, and therefore also of the strategic brand building narrative, will revolve around emotional connection, authenticity, stakeholder involvement, and risk reduction to counteract the incumbent loyalty and complexity encountered when entering an established market.

To navigate the complex challenges outlined above, WAFE must adopt a branding approach that is both strategic and holistic. Figure 25 synthesizes the key branding theories, frameworks, and models discussed in this chapter. It translates them into actionable guidance tailored for WAFE’s market entry. The different steps include a potential process to implementing the different branding theories described. The figure describes shortly which implications each theory would have when applied on WAFE’s branding. This way, it will become possible to build WAFE a brand that is compelling, coherent, and trustworthy within its mature and competitive environment. A more detailed description of this figure with more in-dept implications for WAFE can be found in a table in Appendix I.

Each step in the figure highlights the strategic implications and intended impact on WAFE’s ability to differentiate itself from competitors, connect emotionally with customers, and establish a sustainable long-term competitive advantage. This structured overview provides a clear foundational strategy to build the brand, ensuring WAFE will be able to build lasting relationships and meaningful brand experiences beyond product features and pricing.

What can be taken from this chapter and Figure 25 is that WAFE must not only lead with salience, but quickly build emotional and symbolic depth. By picking a suitable archetype to enhance WAFE’s personality, it will be easier to determine how the brand should communicate and interact with the market and its consumers.

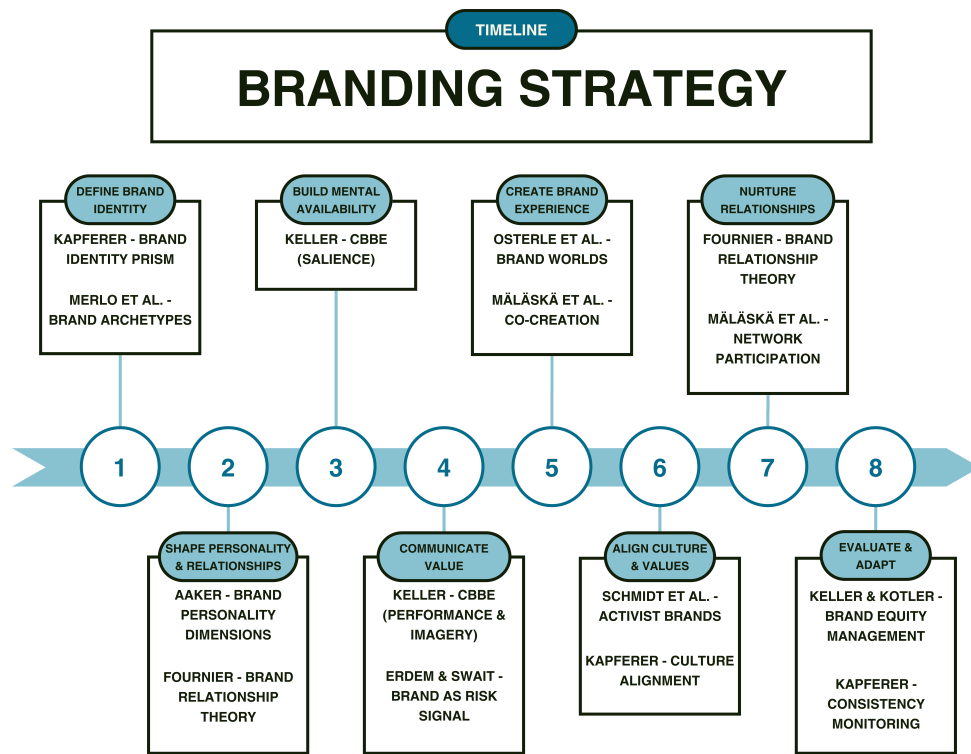


Fig. 25: Branding strategy by practical use of branding theories.

WAFE must also be immersive. Using the “brand world” concept [36]. Storytelling, design language, and user experiences will be harmonized into a coherent whole. This will ensure emotional engagement, making the brand feel like a space rather than just a product. To apply this aspect to WAFE, it will be important that all aspects of the brand, including factors like tone, visuals, behavior, and values, form one cohesive immersive experience.

Furthermore, sociopolitical alignment will be pursued authentically and sincerely. WAFE will articulate its values clearly and embed them into both communication and conduct. Consumers increasingly reward brands that take principled stands [37].

Co-creation will also be play a part in WAFE’s development. If possible, early users, partners, and even employees should be invited into the branding process, ensuring that meaning is shared rather than imposed. This participatory ethos is key to establishing legitimacy in a crowded market [29].

3.5 Branding as Blueprint

The core insight of this chapter is how important brands can be when entering an established market as a new player. When strategically constructed, brands possess the power to overcome not only logistical and financial barriers but also emotional and symbolic barriers. They will function not as a signal or promise, but as a blueprint, guiding the necessary architecture needed to conquer an established market.

Branding provides a way to organize perception, foster connection, and build trust within the consumer base. Branding outperforms other entry strategies by addressing the full spectrum of human decision making: rational, emotional, and symbolic. For WAFE, branding will not just be a surface-level tactic, it will be the structural foundation for its relevance, resonance, and resilience within the market.

Figure 25 refines the most essential branding theories into actionable insights. It offers a clear overview of how each theory could contribute into building emotional connection and market credibility. This figure will serve as a reference framework for the brand development phase of this thesis, ensuring the theoretical insights from this chapter can be translated into practice.

However, this can be expanded on even further. While the theories from this chapter have provided a kind of theoretical framework to follow regarding WAFE's strategic branding process, branding as a blueprint is not only limited to WAFE itself. Any brand wishing to enter an established and competitive market could benefit from strong branding and will require a respective process or blueprint to do so. Therefore, the process used for WAFE can be reiterated and adjusted to suit potential future brands in similar instances.

By looking at the different steps that were taken in the process of this thesis and towards building WAFE, a framework of steps can be derived that would also be applicable to other new brands in the future. Entering an established and competitive market as a new player is not unique to WAFE and could therefore be described and put into a framework, or blueprint rather, for other brands in the future.

The framework that can be derived from the branding process described in this thesis (Figure 26) starts with defining the context in which the new brand will present itself. This context includes different factors that should already be known by the company or founders behind the brand, factors like the initial intention, intended market, prospective products and/or services. This preexisting knowledge will define the research that follows. Research, much like the one performed in this thesis, that analyzes the market and competitors thoroughly. If some of this contextual knowledge surrounding the new company or brand is not yet known, this should first be established. For example, in case of WAFE it is not yet known what the relationship between WAFE and Velda will be, nor the kind of entity WAFE will become. This knowledge regarding the strategy and context for WAFE will influence its branding and will therefore be determined before implementing the branding theories discussed in this chapter.

The market analysis will then form the basis for the next steps in the framework. *Points of Parity* and *Points of Differentiation* [38] can be used to determine requirements for the brand, how it can learn from the market, or how it should set itself apart from competitors. Essentially, all contextual knowledge should be completed before the brand will be built. In the process of this thesis this is also the case. Though branding theories might already be discussed in this chapter to define the necessity of branding in this context and ensure a strong theoretical basis, the actual branding will only be applied in Chapter 5.

After determining the initial context, the next part of the process will not be entirely linear and will influence itself in different ways, for example: Merlo et al.'s archetypes will affect the tone of voice of a brand which in turn will affect the visual identity; stakeholder involvement will influence trustworthiness or redefine positioning; and brand experience is influenced by the brand values, which in turn influence the identity and vice versa. This part of the framework has therefore become an interconnected and iterative layer.

What follows will be continuous monitoring and adaptation to ensure the brand stays relevant in the market, while simultaneously ensuring continuity and coherence of the brand itself. Important is, that

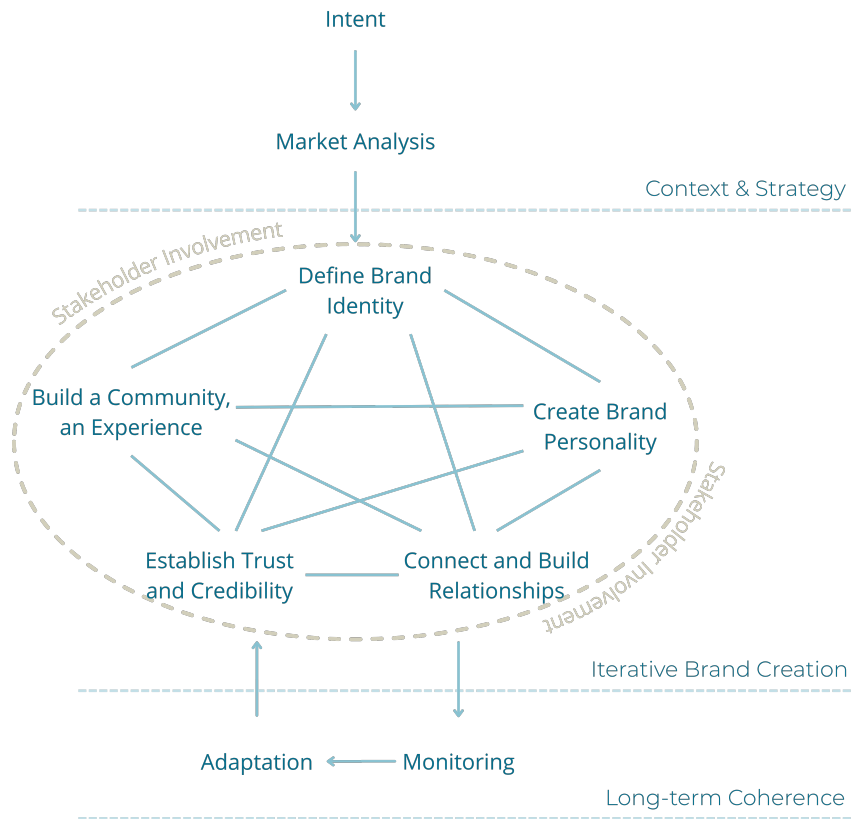


Fig. 26: Framework for Branding as Blueprint for a Market Entry Strategy.

while the adaptation step does loosely influence the previous interconnected process, the core identity of the brand should not easily change. The brand should always stay true to its own values and identity, while also evolving along with the market. This will result into long term coherence for the brand, and ensure continuous growth.

4 STRATEGIC VISION

Before the branding process described in the previous chapter can be applied to WAFE, it is first important to determine what exactly ‘WAFE’ will be. Currently, it is still in a conceptual phase and developed through members of Velda and students working on their graduation assignments. ‘WAFE’ itself is not yet an entity and just a name for an idea that is still being actualized. One of the questions posed by Middelbos and Veldhuis with regards to this thesis, was to determine what the relationship between WAFE and Velda would be. This is not only important to determine strategies for marketing, sales, and production, but also political and managerial decisions. In this context there are two different questions that need answering: what are possible cooperation or relationship options for WAFE and Velda, and would these fit the current situation and long-term planning of both companies; And what exactly will WAFE itself be? This chapter will work on explaining some of the possibilities and recommending the most suitable strategic visions for WAFE.

4.1 WAFE and Velda’s Relationship

To determine the best possible relationship between WAFE and Velda, Table 2 has been created to summarize different kinds of cooperation and company relationship forms, each with a short explanation why they would or wouldn’t fit within this specific context.

Relation	Description	Advantages	Why/Why Not Suitable
<i>Internal Division</i>	WAFE stays inside Velda	Resource efficiency, control	Stifles independence, kills brand identity
<i>Joint Venture</i>	New entity jointly owned	Shared risk, pooled IP	Too tied to Velda, not scalable or neutral
<i>Minority Ownership</i>	Velda holds small share	Access to funds/networks	Still perceived as Velda-controlled
<i>White Label</i>	WAFE products under Velda brand	Quick to market	No WAFE brand recognition possible
<i>Licensing Partner</i>	Velda pays to use WAFE tech	Revenue stream, scalable	Requires strong IP protection
<i>Distribution Partner</i>	Velda sells WAFE’s products	Market access, reputation boost	Short-term only, branding risks
<i>Co-development Partner</i>	Joint R&D, shared innovation	Resource synergy	Conflicting visions, diluted brand
<i>Supplier/Contractor</i>	Velda supplies parts/services	Leverages existing infrastructure	Creates dependency, unclear roles
<i>Advisory/Strategic Mentor</i>	Velda advises informally	Experience, knowledge sharing	Could work short term, but not as long-term strategy
<i>Customer Pilot Partner</i>	Velda acts as first customer	Feedback loop, validation	Can be a soft way to test the market
<i>Strategic Spin-Off</i>	Separate legal entity, launched from Velda	Combines credibility with independence	Enables future growth, clear brand

Table 2: Potentially suitable relationship models between WAFE and Velda.

As it has already been determined how important branding will be in WAFE's entry into their established market, many of these strategies can already be determined as unsuitable. Furthermore, a few of the other wishes and considerations Middelbos and Veldhuis have voiced also play a role in eliminating some of the strategies:

- WAFE will sell its system through its own webpage and its Toveniers.
- After entering the market with its system that allows compatibility with other products through a special connector, WAFE will also offer its own line of products.
- WAFE will have the possibility and intention to grow beyond Velda's current capabilities.
- There are not yet any IP possibilities found.
- The vision for WAFE is different than that of Velda, and so is its identity.
- Later, Velda might sell products that can directly be attached to WAFE's system (so without the connectors products from competitors will need, with required technology implemented directly into the product).

As this eliminates almost all options, there are only a few considerations left to make. The two most promising strategies from this table are an *Advisory/Strategic Mentor* partnership, or a *Strategic Spin-Off* relationship. A mentorship could potentially work to share knowledge and experience in the field of pond management, but it does not consider the fact that currently, Velda and WAFE already share resources, and the knowledge is therefore already present. That is why WAFE can be considered a *Strategic Spin-Off* from Velda. It will initially be incubated by Velda employees (as it currently is), but will be deliberately structured to become a full independent entity long-term as this is necessary for the intended strategic brand development. With the intention for WAFE to enter the market of automated garden management, it is simply the best option for it to become a separate entity to Velda, even though some resources could be shared in the beginning.

Therefore, the relationship between Velda and WAFE should start off with early-phase collaboration limited to distribution and support, with a long-term strategy focused on distinct branding, neutral technology, and independent ecosystem development. This strategy, shown in Figure 27, starts with an incubation phase, where WAFE uses Velda's knowledge, people, and resources to start up. Afterwards external personnel can be drafted which will allow WAFE to slowly separate from Velda with its own brand identity. In this stage, loose collaboration is possible and would still exist, though with no dependence. Lastly, WAFE will grow to stand as an independent structure, though what WAFE will then look like will still be determined in the next section.

4.2 WAFE as an Entity

Now that the answer to the question posed by WAFE's founders has been found, the next step is to determine what exactly will need to be branded in the following chapter. For that, a few facts about WAFE have been listed below which will help in determining the best strategic growth plan for WAFE will be. This growth plan, together with the incubation model from the infographic above, will give directions to WAFE's management and ensure WAFE won't just be able to enter and establish itself in the market, but grow to a size where it will have the possibility to dominate it. The facts about WAFE that are currently known and will influence the growth plan include:

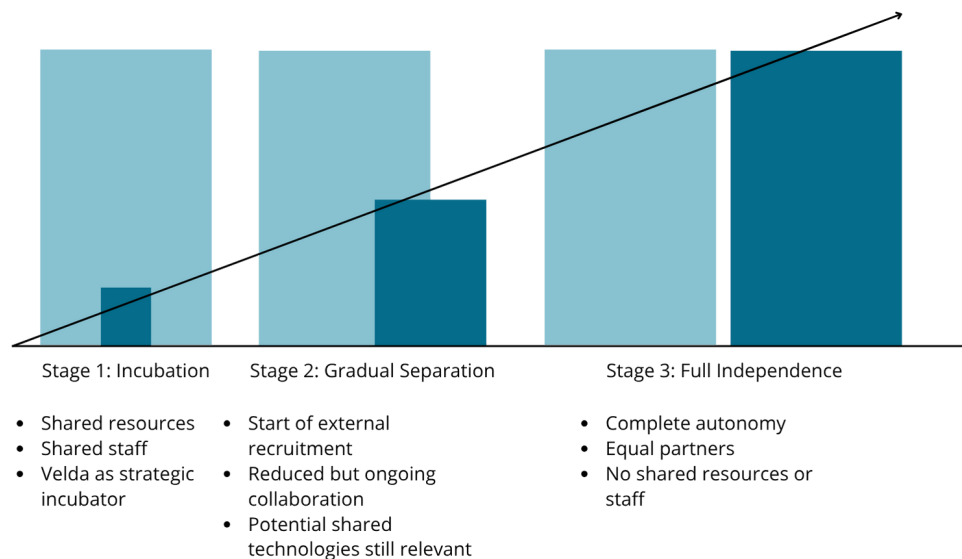


Fig. 27: Infographic of how the relationship between WAFE and Velda will evolve from strategic spin-off to independence.

- Products from other companies can be connected to WAFE's powerline system.
- WAFE will use Matter to control and combine applications and automation systems from different product brands.
- WAFE intends to make their own product lines in the future.
- Branding is a vital part of WAFE's market entry strategy.
- Middelbos and Veldhuis are looking into IP possibilities.
- WAFE will offer installation, repair, and maintenance services through its Toveniers.
- WAFE intends to grow large and strives to become a leader in the garden management market.
- Ideally, in the future competitors will use the technology in WAFE's connectors in their own products so the connectors won't be needed anymore.

Keeping these facts in mind and looking at a list of possible strategies and entities WAFE could potentially adopt, it will be possible to determine what fits the capabilities the brand currently possesses, as well as possibilities for it to grow into. WAFE will be a strategic spin-off from Velda, but now the focus will be on WAFE's own entity, and what will be branded, designed, structured, and grown. The list in Appendix K shows multiple strategies/entity types that could potentially be a fit for WAFE, now or in the future.

Entities that have been evaluated as structure for WAFE and explained in this table are:

- System
- Product Service System
- Umbrella Brand

- Technology Brand
- Licensing Platform
- Certification Platform
- Compatibility Standard
- Interoperability Standard
- Open Technology Standard
- Ecosystem Brand
- Lifestyle Brand
- Franchise Model
- Vertical Integration
- House of Brands
- Standalone Product Company
- Infrastructure Layer (Invisible)

Whether each model could be considered as suitable for WAFE, has been decided through a discussion with WAFE's founders into the different strategies, and stems from a combination of their intentions, research, and the previous list of facts about WAFE.

This strategic entity model table in Appendix K not only reflects theoretical possibilities for WAFE's future, but also real strategic decisions made through discussions with WAFE's founders, research, and brand development tools. By eliminating options that were incompatible with WAFE's ambitions, values, and current stage of development, the table provides a basis for a potential roadmap for WAFE's evolution.

From this table it can also be concluded that the most suitable model for WAFE is not a static identity, but a growth path. As WAFE starts out with its powerline system, powered by Matter, it can be considered as a Matter-operated interoperable system. This is essentially the basis of WAFE's identity. Once the Toveniers have been chosen and educated WAFE will quickly grow into a Product Service System (PSS), the core of WAFE's identity. As a next step, WAFE can work on those different product lines it envisions in its future and turn into an umbrella brand. From here, there is no one clear path for WAFE's possible future growth. Each next step has some requirements that need to be met before they can be reached, some of which include managerial, legal, or even market-related factors to achieve.

Figure 28 shows a roadmap with different phases WAFE could go through for its growth. Phases 1 to 3 include steps that are mostly feasible to reach in the capacity that WAFE currently exists and intends to be. The step focusing on IP possibilities is the only one in the roadmap that spans different phases and is also the only one within the top part of the roadmap that does not have the certainty of being completed. Growing to a PSS should be feasible for WAFE, but licensing depends on legal matters mostly out of WAFE’s control.

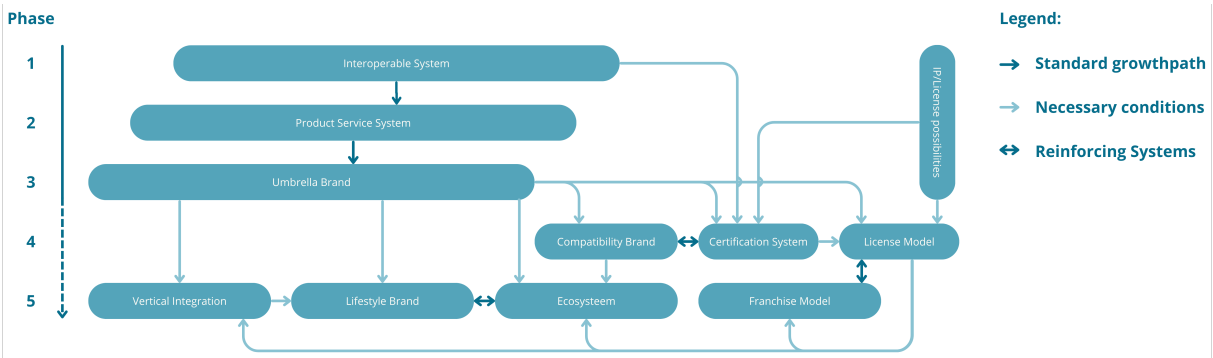


Fig. 28: Roadmap for WAFE’s long-term growth.

Not only the later steps have requirements that need to be met to be actualized, but the possibility for WAFE to grow that far is more uncertain than the ability to grow into a product service system. A table has been created to better outline each step, and highlight the necessary requirements needed for WAFE to develop further (Appendix J). This table lists the requirements for implementation for each of the steps in the roadmap. Whether and in what time frame these requirements can be completed determines the amount of time needed for WAFE to grow into a new phase. WAFE’s management can use the requirements in Appendix A as guidelines for guiding their market process, with the road map as visual representation of these steps.

The specific requirements that are met in the future will define WAFE’s potential growth path. Management will be able to determine what should be achievable, and in which direction WAFE would be most likely to grow and anticipate on that. Simultaneously, the roadmap could also be used to actively push WAFE into a certain direction. Currently there had not yet been communicated a clear preference for WAFE’s far-away future, but if this were to change, this roadmap would be able to guide WAFE into reaching that stage by presenting the required steps to reach it.

It is important to note that within this implementation process, the first three phases are of high importance and must be tightly controlled and consistently executed. These phases lay the symbolic and structural foundation for all future growth possibilities and must therefore be of high quality to be able to support following stages. Whether stage four (mid) and stage five (late) can be reached however, cannot yet be determined and depends on WAFE’s future capabilities. However, were it to be discovered that these stages are unreachable, the early stages will ensure that WAFE has grown into a strong and large umbrella brand that holds substantial influence on the market.

The mid-stage expansion in phase four will only be possible if brand trust is high and the system is both stable and distinctive. The final stage is even more difficult to reach and is completely optional, but it does offer exponential growth if the earlier stages are successful. The final stages require a shift in identity, from product provider to platform leader and emotional brand, and must therefore be executed

with care to ensure WAFE remains true to its core identity, which will be developed in the next chapter.

4.3 Entity Roadmap

The previous roadmap is only applicable to WAFE or entities dealing with the same set of circumstances, but just like the blueprint in Chapter 3 this entity roadmap could be generalized. In WAFE's case the new entity was established from within Velda, but not all entities are founded this way. When a new entity is created, be it from scratch or alongside an existing company, it will have to go through a series of strategic steps that ensure its internal structure, external relevance, and future scalability are sound. With WAFE's roadmap as inspiration, a general process following different phases has been created to help new entities form a cohesive strategic foundation (Figure 29). While each entity will differ in specifics, this six-step framework outlines key considerations from core offering to long-term growth opportunities. This roadmap framework also includes a dedicated step on intellectual property and licensing, which is essential for growth and defensibility for most new entities.

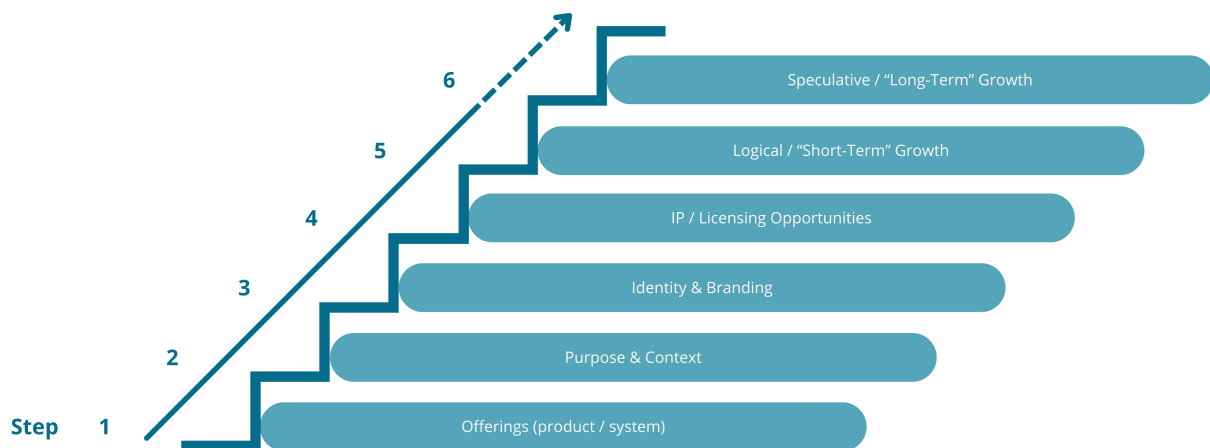


Fig. 29: General Strategic Roadmap for New Entities.

This roadmap framework is applicable to new entities that deliver some kind of product or system to consumers. The *first step* reflects their core offering, what they will create and deliver to the market. This includes the product, system, or service that justifies the entity's existence. In WAFE's case this would be the Matter-operated interoperable, integrated low-voltage garden management system. This offering will form the basis for determining the kind of entity the offering could evolve into, both short-term and in a more long-term roadmap.

The *second step* defines the purpose and context of the entity. In this step it is important to determine strategic intent, where and why the entity exists. This also includes potential parent relationships and the level of independence, the relevant industry, and the regulatory and cultural context. For WAFE this step was essential in determining its relationship to Velda as a strategic spin-off. This part of the framework is more of a transition phase to ensure that the entity possesses all necessary knowledge and foundation to continue building its strategic direction. As for WAFE this step had already been completed before building the roadmap, it does not appear in Figure 28, here it functions as background knowledge.

Next, an entity should determine what their brand will revolve around, what their brandable content will be. In this *third step* the entity will shift from its core offering and context to a branded experience or value system. Here, it will be identified what can be branded and emotionally positioned in the market. This content could simply be the basic offering as determined in the first phase, but it could also be a

broader core, like in case of WAFE. WAFE's basic offering will be the interoperable system, but its core will be its branded Product Service System.

Step four would generally include an IP and licensing step, where the entity would ensure their content can be protected. Licensing can become a strategic revenue stream, growth accelerator, or offer growth opportunities for the entity. WAFE deviates in this step. Despite efforts WAFE's founders have not yet found totally unique, protectable technologies that could be licensed. However, this will hopefully still become a possibility in the future when new protocols, connectors, or design models are designed.

After this basis has been formed, the entity has likely already found the opportunity to enter the market. The core is defined, branded, and protected. Because of this, the *fifth step* is focused on how to further grow this entity. In WAFE's personal roadmap this step would correspond to the third phase, where WAFE becomes an umbrella brand. This step is a logical growth path based on the entity's core.

Lastly, the speculative, or long-term growth paths of the entity can be determined. This *sixth step* determines what could potentially happen in the future. It projects trajectories that are not yet possible, but which can form a guideline or development visions for the future. By mapping these trajectories beforehand, it will become possible to speculate on new markets, technologies, segments, or other entity forms. In WAFE's roadmap this step corresponds with phases 4 and 5, where the growth requirements are not yet met, but which could be reachable if the necessary growth or changes have been applied.

This general roadmap framework could potentially offer a structured foundation for the strategic development of new entities. Whether the new entity is founded from an existing organization, like WAFE, or is created independently, this framework should be able to provide some structure in determining the entity's growth plan. While every entity will have its unique challenges and might need to differ from the framework a little, this model should be able to provide a reference point for future entrepreneurial growth opportunities.

5 STRATEGIC BRAND DEVELOPMENT

Based on the research in previous chapters, this chapter will outline how the WAFE brand was constructed step-by-step. Each branding element and decision was derived from insights gained from the market analysis, branding theories and frameworks, strategic vision, value proposition design, and insights from the founders.

This chapter will present a transparent rationale for the branding decisions made by showing how the different theories discussed in Chapter 3 were applied in practice, and why each branding step was necessary. The structured figure from Chapter 3, which explained how different branding theories could be used to impact WAFE's entry into the established market, has been used as a basis for the structure of this chapter. However, the branding process was a holistic and non-linear process, with many of the steps highlighted in this figure deeply intertwined. Though this figure highlights perfectly the usefulness of the different theories, it was illogical to implement these in the eight steps in which they have been presented. Therefore, a process more similar to the framework presented in Chapter 3 has been used to develop WAFE's brand identity (Figure 30). The table in Appendix F.1 shows exactly how the different branding steps described in Chapter 3 have been restructured to ensure better narrative flow of the actual process used in WAFE's branding and how these correspond with the structure of the process used here.

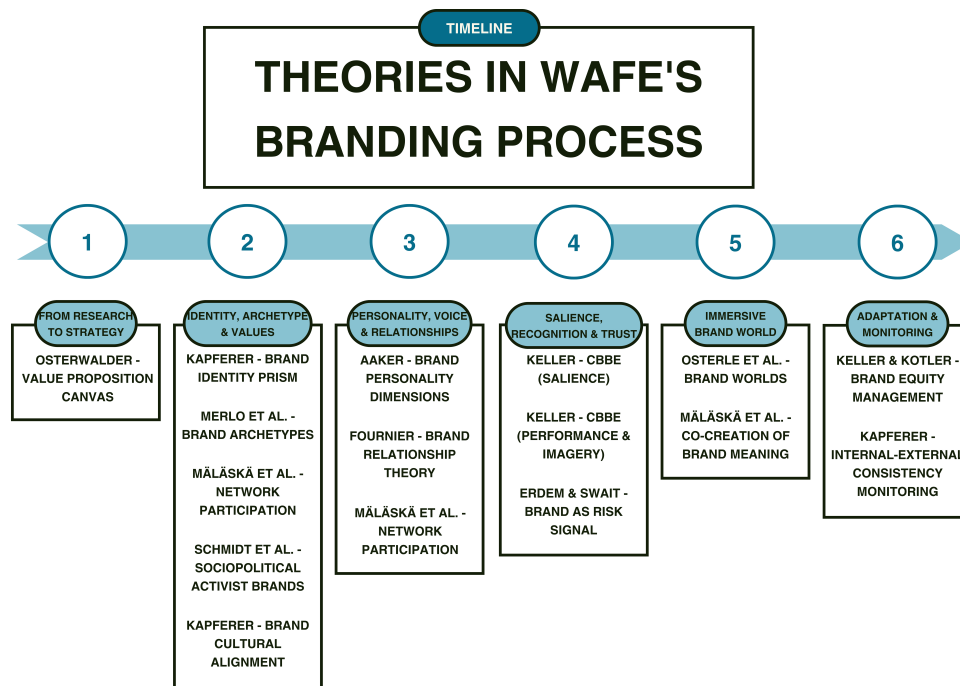


Fig. 30: Theories in WAFE's brand identity development process.

These choices and the outcomes of the different frameworks and methods used in each chapter form the foundation of a comprehensive Brand Manual, which can be found in Appendix F.1.

5.1 From Research to Strategy

As had already been determined, WAFE will enter a mature market where players like In-Lite, Philips Hue, BEGA, Gardena, and Oase dominate niche verticals in lighting, irrigation, and pond ecosystems. Yet, none of these players offers a complete, integrated, automated, and eco-conscious garden solution

like WAFE plans to market. The market gaps identified through the competitor analysis and consumer behavior studies revealed that:

- Lack of a fully integrated garden management ecosystem.
- Competing systems depend on Wi-Fi connection throughout the entire garden to function.
- Complexity of installation and fragmentation.
- Cold or unrelatable brand experiences.
- Limited cross compatibility and scalability.
- Competitors often deal with seasonal focus and narrow product lines.
- Untapped brand ecosystem potential.

To find strategic brand imperatives, these insights will be combined with insights from a Value Proposition Canvas as proposed by Alexander Osterwalder [39] to construct WAFE's brand with strategic grounding as basis. The canvas will ensure that all further decisions made in the branding process will be based on the needs and wishes of the customer. This is done to ensure there is a connection between what the customer wants and what WAFE will offer.

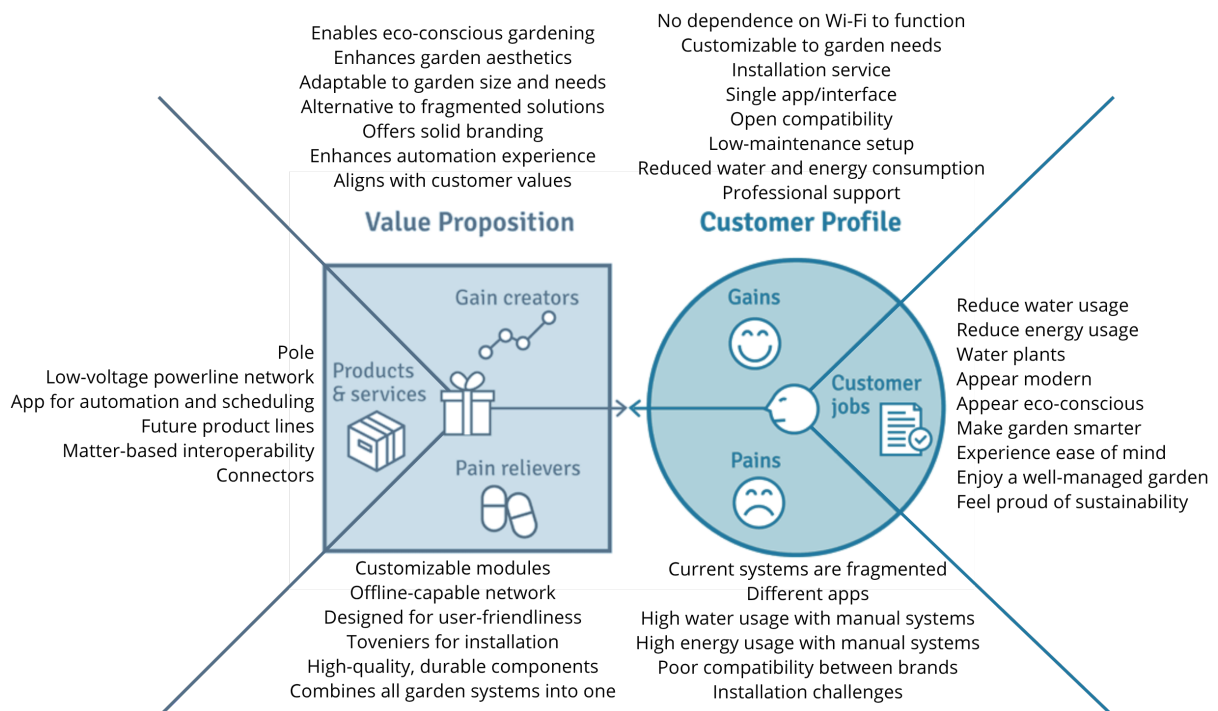


Fig. 31: Value Proposition Canvas for WAFE's customers.

The Value Proposition Canvas (Fig. 31) contemplates potential jobs, pains, and gains that the customer might need to deal with in the context of garden management. Knowing this, WAFE can focus on creating products and services, pain relievers, and gain creators to counteract or match these factors. By doing so, more value can be created, and strategic brand imperatives can be distilled. Important conclusions from this canvas are:

- Product-market fit exists: WAFE solves some serious pain points for the customer, solving a need in the market.
- Differentiation through integration and offline capabilities: its fully integrated system that does not rely on a Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connection to function sets WAFE apart from existing solutions.
- Customers seek simplicity and control: Jobs and gains highlight a desire for ease-of-use, automation, and simple control of products.
- Emotional and social gains are also important: Customers want to enjoy a well-maintained garden, experience ease of mind, and feel proud of being sustainably active.
- Modularity and customization are expected: Some customers only want irrigation, others lighting, and almost all want flexibility.
- Quality and professionalism are expected: People want quality, durability, and support.

These insights informed WAFE's strategic purpose: *"To bring comfort, ease, and automation to the green garden. Offering the simplicity of a grey garden, without sacrificing sustainability or aesthetics."* This purpose explains WAFE's intent within the market and acts as the foundation for all brand-building decisions and will help define both emotional and practical practices of the brand.

5.2 Identity, Values, and Archetype

5.2.1 Identity

The first formal branding step was to express WAFE's identity. As described in Chapter 4, a strong brand identity has the potential to ensure internal coherence and external resonance for a brand. With Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism [33], it is possible to ensure a holistic and well-rounded identity is formed for both internal and external presentation. This framework uses six facets, split into four sections. The top half focuses on the identity as perceived by the sender, and the bottom half as perceived by the receiver. Simultaneously the left side focusses on external identity, and the right side on internal identity. From the six facets Physique will describe tangible and visual brand features; Personality will be about human traits the brand should convey; Culture will mirror internal company values, ethics, and working style; Relationship will describe the style of interaction with the customers; Reflection will explain the typical kind of user from an external viewpoint; and Self-Image will voice the inner feelings the customer will experience when using the brand.

Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism was used in a co-creation session with WAFE's founders and designer and completed collaboratively. Each was given a form with the prism and were asked to fill in each facet for themselves. This was done to ensure internal culture would align with the external communication to be designed. Afterwards, everyone's interpretation of WAFE's identity was discussed and together WAFE's final Brand Identity Prism, as shown in Figure 32, was created.



Fig. 32: Brand Identity Prism for WAFE.

5.2.2 Archetypes

During the same co-creation session everyone was asked to take a look at the different brand archetypes [30] and choose the ones they would find most suitable for WAFE. These personality types brands can embody are based on human concepts from psychology. They will help WAFE connect with its customers on an emotional level by aligning motivations, fears, and desires. By attaching such an archetype to WAFE, it will become more relatable and recognizable to customers.

From these archetypes (Figure 33), the Caregiver archetype was discussed to be the most suitable to reflect WAFE's identity. The Caregiver is emotionally supportive and emulates WAFE's trust-based positioning. Communication and customer relations will be of core importance to WAFE, and something which Veldhuis and Middelbos also find very important for WAFE's identity. Therefore, this archetype will also reinforce these supportive, reliable, and emotionally intelligent aspects of the brand. With this, WAFE will appeal to users who seek relief from complexity, and who desire peace of mind in the garden. During the session it was also determined that this archetype suits WAFE best but does not completely cover all of WAFE's identity. Therefore, it was decided to reinforce it with elements of the Sage and the Creator, to reflect WAFE's expertise and innovation.

Both these theories were executed through a co-creation lens to ensure that WAFE's meaning is legitimate, shared, and not solely top-down imposed [29]. In Appendix F.1 the form that has been used for this session can be found, as well as the anonymized answers to this form. As can be seen, a third exercise was performed during this session, where everyone was asked how they would see WAFE's personality if it was a human. However, the outcomes of this exercise are not of importance yet at this point in the thesis and will be further discussed in part 5.3.

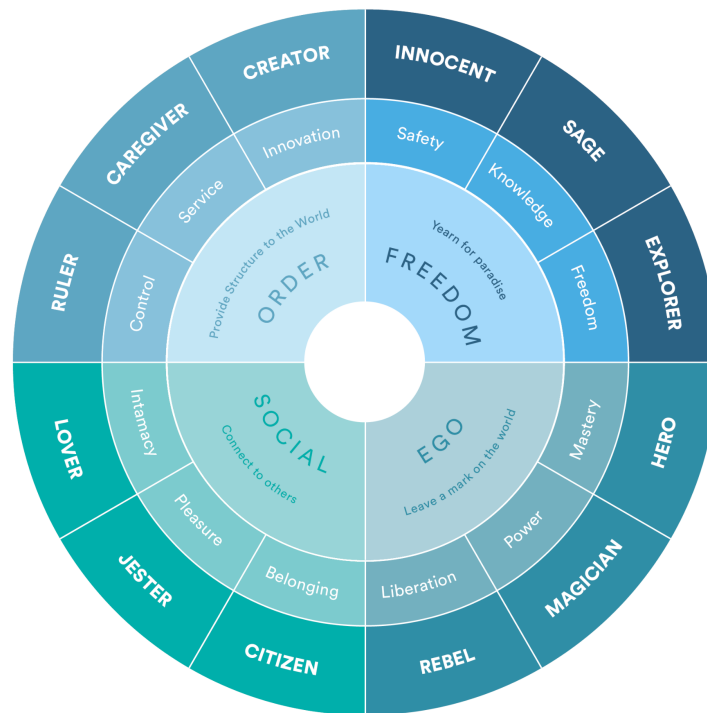


Fig. 33: The twelve Brand Archetypes by Merlo et al. [30].

5.2.3 Values

Now that WAFE's identity has gotten some structure, depth can be given in the form of values. These values will form the backbone of the brand and reflect the core of its identity. Defining these values will truly bring life to WAFE and provide clear directions with regards to all future touchpoints.

To ensure the values adhere to sociopolitical expectations [37] they have been based on all prior research up to this point. From all different kinds of methods and models used from the market analysis, customer preferences, strategic positioning goals, and the initial identity, these values are intended to guide both internal conduct and external branding [33].

The process of defining the core values for WAFE can be found in Figure 34. In this process a list of values that has been drafted from the research has been narrowed down into three core values and eight sub-values. The three main values of Human Centered Sustainability, Smart Integration, and Empowering Simplicity are fixed principles that can be considered as WAFE's DNA and strategic compass. These values are timeless and will reflect what WAFE stands for regardless of possible future trends and changes in the market. However, these values can be seen as a little abstract and might not be directly applicable to all situations. Therefore, the sub-values are intended to translate these core values into behavior, design choices, customer experiences, and character traits. These sub-values will be easier to implement into the products, communication, and culture of WAFE as they provide more operational guidelines than compared to the core values. Figure 35 shows all sub-values and under which core value they can be grouped.

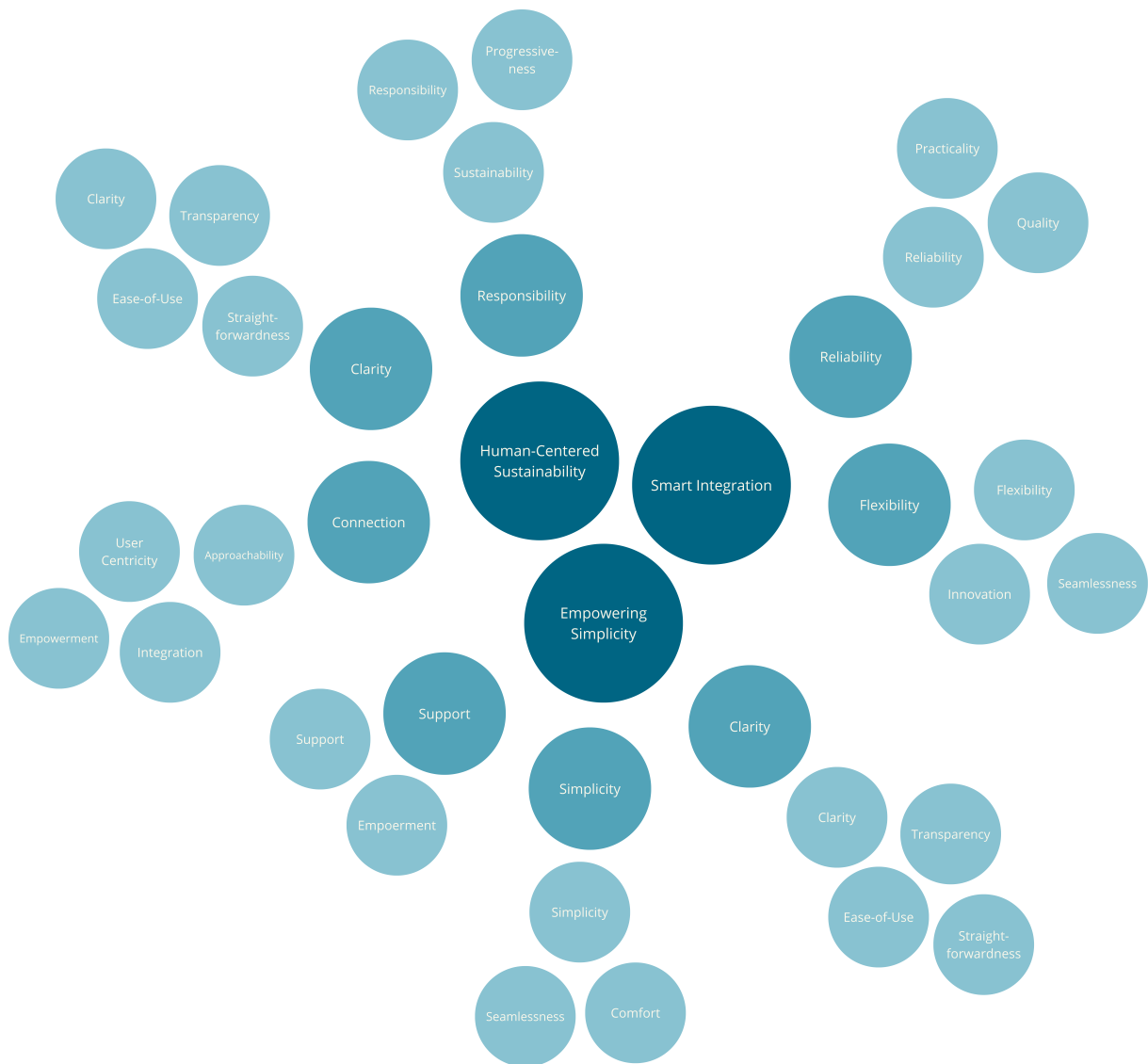


Fig. 34: Creation of WAFE's values.

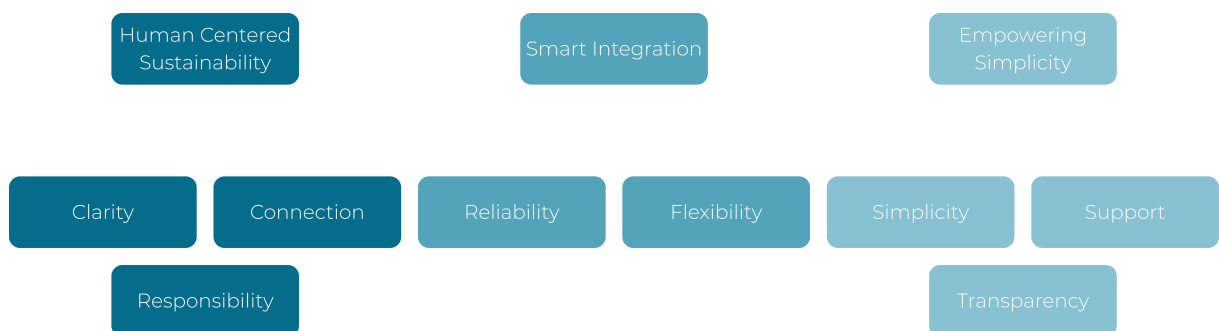


Fig. 35: WAFE's three core values with respective sub-values.

On Page 9 of the Brand Manual in Appendix F.1 the values are explained more thoroughly, each with a thorough definition, and all sub-values with an example of application.

5.3 *Personality, Voice, and Relationships*

5.3.1 *Personality*

During the co-creation session there was a third exercise that was performed together, as seen in Appendix F.1. This exercise was focused on creating a suitable brand personality for WAFE, that could be the humanized counterpart of WAFE. During the session everyone was asked to think up a few characteristics and habits for this person, as well as things like name, age and gender.

Using the output from this session it was quickly determined that WAFE’s humanized personality would be a 38-year-old male named Alex. To ensure Alex would fit completely within the brand identity for WAFE, its archetype, and the values it represents, the assistance of AI engine Chat-GPT was used to summarize and reshape this information into a persona. The prompt used can be found in Appendix F.1, as well as the generated outcome which has been used as a basis to further develop Alex.

To bring the brand persona to life even more, Aaker’s brand personality framework [32] was used. Through this framework (Figure 36), different personality traits can be found which WAFE (and therefore Alex) could adopt. By reflecting these traits in the different brand touchpoints, WAFE will be able to align with the target market and ensure the brand persona will be consistent, allowing customers to emotionally engage with it.

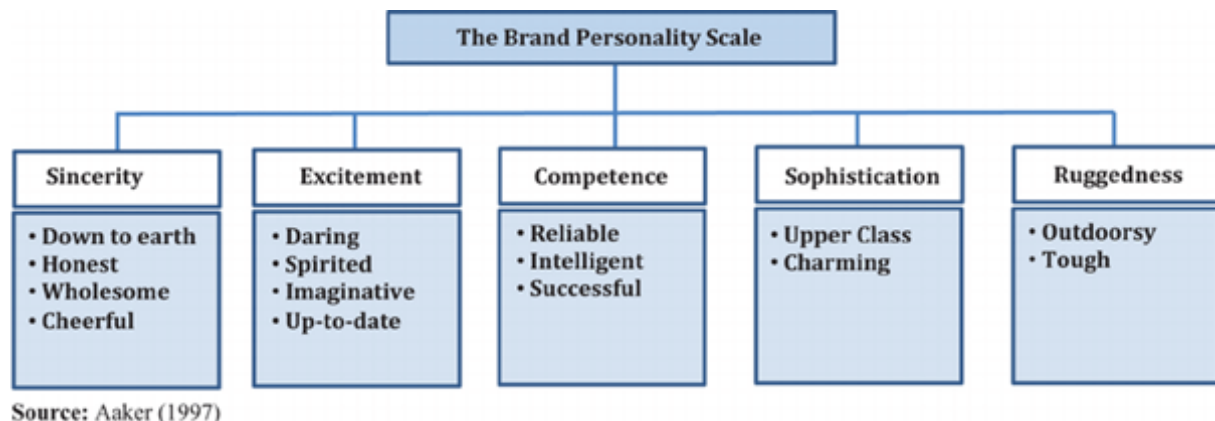


Fig. 36: Aaker’s Brand Personality Framework [32].

Table 3 shows how high WAFE scores on each of these personalities, which together with Alex will help express tone, design, and customer interaction. As can be seen, sincerity would be the core dimension of WAFE’s personality, supported by competence and with a touch of sophistication. This means that WAFE would have a clear, honest, and calm personality while also being smart, efficient, and trustworthy in a refined, but ‘non-flashy’ way. These personality traits conform to WAFE’s identity as it has earlier been determined, as well as the values and persona, together forming a holistic image of who WAFE will be.

The cumulation of methods used to determine WAFE’s personality has been used to create a clear persona for Alex. This persona is shown in Figure 37 and in more detail on Page 11 of the Brand Manual.

Personality Trait	Connection to WAFE's Personality
<i>Sincerity</i>	✓✓✓✓✓ – Honest, calm, trustworthy, and genuine, always speaking with transparency about sustainability and ease.
<i>Excitement</i>	✓ – Low-key, subtle innovation, but not as focus point. Fostering curiosity without complexity.
<i>Competence</i>	✓✓✓✓ – Reliable, smart, and efficient technology with high-quality modular design. Technology users can count on.
<i>Sophistication</i>	✓✓ – Quietly refined. Not flashy but carefully designed to fit elegant gardens through modern and minimal design.
<i>Ruggedness</i>	✗ – Grounded and practical, but not rugged in its personality.

Table 3: WAFE's Personality traits as per Aaker's framework [32].

ALEX

BRAND PERSONA

ABOUT

The kind of neighbor who lets you borrow his garden hose without expecting it back, the friend who helps you move without making a big deal out of it, and the colleague who simplifies complicated problems. He is not perfect, but he always shows up, and that is what makes him invaluable

BIO

Alex (38) is calm, practical, and easy to talk to. He doesn't say much, he avoids drama and gets things done. He lives ethically and helps others without expecting anything in return. Reliable, grounded, and thoughtful, Alex is the person to call when you need help and support.

PERSONALITY

Helpful ██████████

Grounded ██████████

Curious ██████████

MOTIVATION

- Helping others in a practical way.
- Making complex things simple.
- Living responsibly and ethically, because it is the right thing to do.

LIKES

- Solving problems
- Being outdoors
- Having deep, meaningful conversations

DISLIKES

- Unnecessary complexity and bureaucracy
- People who use big words to sound smart
- Making a big deal out of small problems

SKILLS

Listening ★★★★★	Practical Thinking ★★★★★
Reliability ★★★★★	Ethical mindset ★★★★☆
Understanding people's motives ★★★★☆	

” Just tell it like it is.

Fig. 37: Brand Persona Alex.

5.3.2 Voice

The emotional identity of WAFE determined through Aaker's framework will not only be expressed in design and customer interaction, but also in the tone of voice WAFE will use. To reflect this identity and tone, WAFE will communicate in a clear and warm way, reinforcing WAFE's role as an enabler. WAFE's goal is to help users enjoy green spaces with less effort, and will communicate this in a practical, intelligent, helpful way.

As an expression of the brand voice, a slogan has been made: "Sustainable. Smart. Simple." This slogan reflects the three core values of WAFE and communicates these to the consumer.

While the brand will mostly be communicating in Dutch, to serve its initial market, the decision to have the slogan be in English is a conscious one. Not only does the translated version of the values 'Duurzaam. Slim. Eenvoudig.' not sound as good, but having slogan in English nudges the consumer into pronouncing the name WAFE just so.

This is important, as 'wave' is the intended pronunciation, opposed to the 'waffe' which Germans and Dutch people close to the German border might be inclined to use. Of course, this pronunciation may cause negative associations with regards to the Second World War, which is not something WAFE is associated with and would like to stay clear of. For the Dutch market however, it will also be possible to communicate through a few key-sentences. These sentences are different from slogans and calls-to-action, and simply notify the reader of WAFE's functions and intentions. Examples of these key-sentences are: "Innovatie in Tuintechniek," or "Technologie voor Tuin en Terras." These kinds of sentences could be placed on websites and advertisements, but also on things like company vans, or combined with WAFE's logo.

Other than the slogan and key-sentences, different uses of WAFE's tone of voice can be found in the examples in Figure 38. This figure shows a few examples of e-mails and call-to-actions on social media. More examples of WAFE's tone of voice can be found on Page 13 of the Brand Manual in Appendix F.1.

5.3.3 Relationships

According to Fournier's Brand Relationship Theory, the personality created for WAFE will help turn it into not just a product, but a partner. WAFE will position itself as a relationship partner in the eyes of consumers, ensuring long-term trust-based emotional bonds can be built. Table 4 shows the different kinds of relationships brands can have with their consumers to form emotional bonds and nurture trust.

Stable & Deep	Low Commitment/ Shallow	Negative/ Unhealthy
Committed partnerships	Casual friends	Enmities
Best friendships	Flings	Dependencies
Kinships	Courtships	Enslavement
Childhood friendships	Marriages of convenience	Secret affairs
Arranged marriages	Compartmentalized friendships	Rebounds

Table 4: The different relationship types brands can have with their customers.

Looking at WAFE's intentions and impact they want to have on the customer's life, it can be said that WAFE definitely does not want to be a fling or a curiosity. WAFE wants to be used daily, relied on, and trusted over time. WAFE aims to become an essential part of garden management infrastructure.

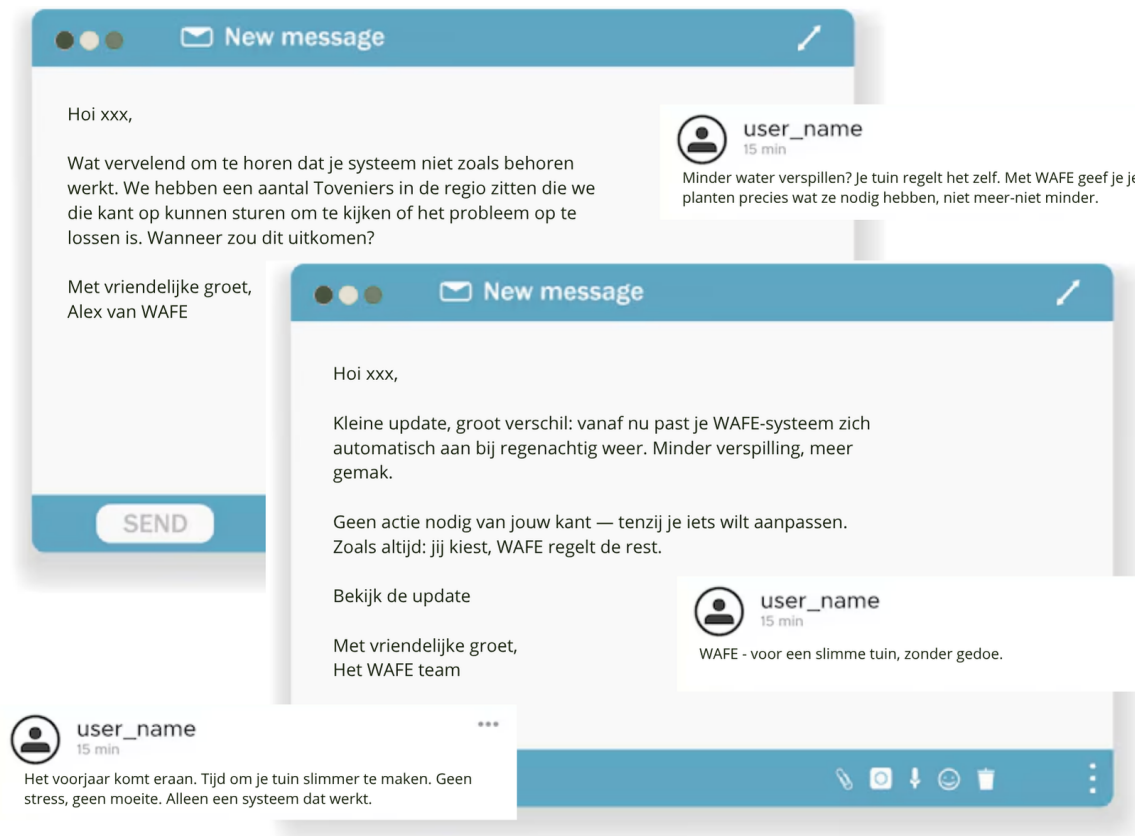


Fig. 38: Examples of e-mails and posts WAFE might make as examples of its tone of voice.

Therefore, WAFE wants users to form a long-term, dependable, and mutually beneficial relationship with them. WAFE wants to be in a *committed partnership* with its customer. WAFE will no longer be envisioned as a simple product, but as a partner customers can depend on to relieve gardening stress and environmental worries.

The relationship might start out as a *courtship*, as WAFE will not be able to immediately have that trust based, dependable relationship with its customer, and the relationship might even be able to grow even further once emotional resonance has been reached. That *committed relationship* might seem best suited for WAFE, does not mean the relationships can't still shift over time. If this happens the relationship could potentially evolve from *committed partnership* to *best friendship*, where WAFE will be a personal and supportive friend instead of a functional one. This relationship would also fit WAFE's identity, as its warm, guiding, and friendly tone of voice and personality emphasize with the user. If this relationship were to be reached, the customer would feel pride, connection, and even empowerment when using WAFE. Most importantly, WAFE strives to form a stable and deep relationship with its users.

The application of the relationship model is not limited to customers but also extends to network co-creation where stakeholders will play a participatory role in the evolution and brand storytelling of WAFE. Through the examples and guidelines for WAFE's tone-of-voice, WAFE's emotional positioning in these relationships will be matched. All visual and verbal communication will reinforce the brand's personality and values and covers all different kinds of relationships.

5.4 *Salience, Recognition, and Trust*

5.4.1 *Salience*

Now that the identity and personality of WAFE have been determined, it is important to create a visual identity that allows customers to recognize the brand, and which complements and visualizes who WAFE is. Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, shown in Figure 39, focuses on creating the right image for a brand. It tracks how consumers build mental and emotional associations with a brand. The top two layers are mostly relevant after the brand has been introduced into the market, but the bottom layer, Salience, is about mental availability, a requirement for a brand to be noticed and recalled in buying situations.

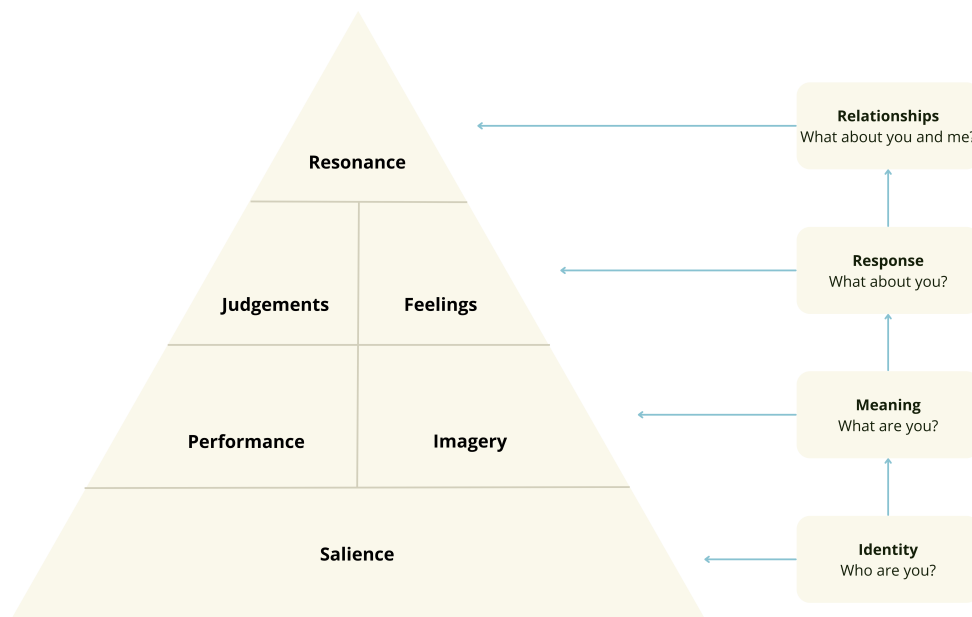


Fig. 39: Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity model [35].

For WAFE, salience cues that will increase its visibility will be embedded in a clear, consistent, and suitable visual system that fits its identity. This includes visual touchpoints like logos, colors, typography, and designs of webpages, packaging, business cards, footnotes for e-mails, and many other touchpoints.

Another important factor in obtaining salience for a brand is to ensure it receives adequate repetitive exposure in context-relevant environments. For WAFE, this would not solely mean garden centers, retail outlets or through its Toveniers, but perhaps also advertisements placed on, for example, weather apps or near community gardens. By increasing awareness of the brand this way, and linking the brand to the consumer's needs, WAFE will become more easily recollected in the consumer's memory during purchasing decisions.

5.4.2 *Recognition*

To foster recognition alongside salience, WAFE's visual identity needed to be both distinctive and aligned with its values. Establishing a clear and consistent visual language was therefore critical to ensure that WAFE would be instantly recognizable and memorable on such a saturated market.

The development of WAFE's visual identity started with a research process into logo styles that reflect WAFE's three core values and eight sub-values. This process, found in Appendix F.1, identifies common trends and design characteristics among logos from existing brands that represent similar values. The intention of mapping these patterns was to determine which visual cues WAFE's logo should align with or diverge from to simultaneously conform and differentiate itself to visual market trends.

The findings of this research have been summarized Table 5, where each brand value has been linked to relevant logo characteristics, along with a short evaluation of their importance in the logo development for WAFE. This evaluation has been guided by the previously determined Dimensions of Brand Personality from Aaker [32]. By doing so, it will be ensured that WAFE's logo communicates the appropriate mix of Sincerity, Competence, and Sophistication.

Value	Logo Requirements	Importance
<i>Human-Centered Sustainability</i>	Simple, clean typography	High – Reflects sincerity
	Dark greens	Moderate – Optional fit for color scheme
<i>Smart Integration</i>	Modern, futuristic style	Moderate – Implies sophistication
	Blue/tech color palette	Moderate – Optional for color scheme
<i>Empowering Simplicity</i>	Minimalistic, simple typography	High – Conveys sincerity and sophistication
	Limited color palette (1-2 colors), flat design	High – Ensures simplicity and clarity
<i>Clarity</i>	Sans Serif or near Sans Serif, white space	High – Supports readability and openness
<i>Connectivity</i>	Rounded shapes, warm colors	High – Communicates caring and sincerity
<i>Responsibility</i>	Nature inspired, minimalistic	High/Moderate – Essential for overall tone
<i>Reliability</i>	Bold, thick typefaces	High – Suggests competence
<i>Flexibility</i>	Adaptive logo usage, bright accents	High – Important for umbrella brand structure
<i>Simplicity</i>	Clean typography, simple icons	High – Reinforces sincere and user-friendly image
<i>Transparency</i>	Text based logo	High – Clear and honest branding
<i>Support</i>	Rounded typefaces, friendly color palette	Moderate/High – Adds warmth and trustworthiness

Table 5: Each of WAFE's values with logo features that represent these values in the market.

Based on these insights, the ideation phase for the logo began with the exploration of several Sans Serif fonts as a neutral and flexible base (Figure 40). Most of these fonts were selected to fit with Alex's personality as a dependable, helpful and trustworthy male. To align the fonts even better with this personality, they have been put in bold and italic, making them feel more manly, robust, and active. With these fonts as basis, several sketches have been made to try and find the perfect fit for WAFE's visual identity (Figure 41). The font that initially jumped out during this process, and has been used in most of the logo ideation sketches was, Gill Sans Nova Ultra Bold.

During this process and concluded from the research into designs already present in the market, it was decided that WAFE's logo would become a text-based logo combined with an icon. Veldhuis and Middelbos had voiced their approval of adding a wave symbol in the logos, as this would suit the name and purpose of the brand. During one of the meetings it was discussed what kind of logo-icon combinations could be interesting. This resulted in three different logo suite iterations (Figure 42).



Fig. 40: Different fonts used as inspiration for WAFE's logo ideation.



Fig. 41: Ideation process for defining WAFE's logo.



Fig. 42: Three early concepts variations for WAFE's logo.

In these concepts the first one was inspired by Veldhuis, mentioning that it might be nice to have an icon above the logo, which in this iteration has become a double wave with colors representing WAFE's technical system (purple), water (blue), and sustainability (green). The use of these colors has resulted from the aforementioned value based logo research and are colors that are generally associated with these aspects.

The second concept resulted from the idea of merging a wave with a lightning bolt, symbolizing WAFE's core focus of supplying a water and energy network to gardens. The placement, size, and shape of this icon has had multiple different iterations throughout the ideation process. Initially, the idea was to have the symbol intersect the letters and form the horizontal bars intersecting the 'A,' 'F,' and 'E' from WAFE. However, this seemed too compact for the main logo of this concept, and was turned into a potential iteration for a sub-logo.

Inspired by the earlier logo research, the third logo iteration was designed with the idea of adding a symbol in front of the text-based logo. In the process of designing this logo the idea still existed to merge a wave symbol with that of a lighting bolt. With inspiration from the performed research at the beginning of this ideation process, the idea arose to use white space to shape this lighting bolt. This resulted into the idea to use two interlocking waves, creating a 'Z' shape between them representing the electricity present in WAFE's functionality.

Although each of these concepts incorporated key elements from the research, none fully met the standards of quality, personality alignment, and brand clarity intended for WAFE. After some discussion with one of Velda's Graphic Designers it was determined that the combination of the heavy font with the symbols unbalanced these logos, and that the font itself might also be a little bit outdated to suit WAFE's personality. Because of this feedback some new iterations were made of these logos with different font types, as well as some more ideation (Figure 43). He also mentioned the possibility of adding cut-outs to the logo's lettering, increasing the uniqueness and recognizability of the logo.

However, because of personal preference towards a heavy, reliable looking, logo, combined with a small case of 'tunnel-vision,' Gill Sans Nova Ultra Bold was not yet entirely eliminated in this second ideation process. What was decided, is that layouts of the three concepts still did not feel entirely suitable as representations of WAFE's identity. A fourth concept was devised (Figure 44) that connected more with WAFE's warm, sociable, helpful, and human-centered features. The previous concepts were mostly focused around its reliable, male, and technological features, where this fourth concept captured a more complete visualization of WAFE's identity.



Fig. 43: Second round of ideating after the initial three concepts were not satisfiable.

This fourth concept was initially still made with the Gill Sans Nova Ultra Bold font, though it now became even more visible that this font would be too heavy and unbalance the logo design, especially after it was made into a logo suite with different iterations and colors (Fig. 45). It was also determined that the color usage of the icon was too light in color and would not be visible enough in most applications.

With respect to the initial concept, several changes have been made for the design of the final logo with regard to its font use (Figure 46) and color usage (Figure 47). It was also determined that it was illogical to have a squared logo as main logo type. Most often logo applications and available space are in horizontal orientation. Because of this, it would be logical to design WAFE's logo the same way. The proposed concept has therefore become WAFE's secondary logo in its logo suite, with the horizontal version, also iterated in Figure 45, as the main logo orientation. A summation of all key adjustments for WAFE's final logo design include:

- **Typography:** Switched to Segoe UI Black, a modern, friendly, and highly readable font which provides the desired balance of sophistication and approachability.
- **Color:** The initial light blue was replaced with a slightly darker tone to improve legibility and application possibilities.
- **Shape:** Cutouts were added within the lettering to introduce more whitespace, enhance visual rhythm, and increase the logo's uniqueness.
- **Hierarchy:** The initial design for the concept became a secondary sub-logo intended for compact applications. A different primary logo was optimized for horizontal usage, which is a much more common application for a logo. The primary logo will also be combinable with brand slogans or elements indicating sections of the umbrella brand. Simultaneously, the sub-logo will be able to function as a basis for a future compatibility logo.



Fig. 44: Fourth logo Concept for WAFE.

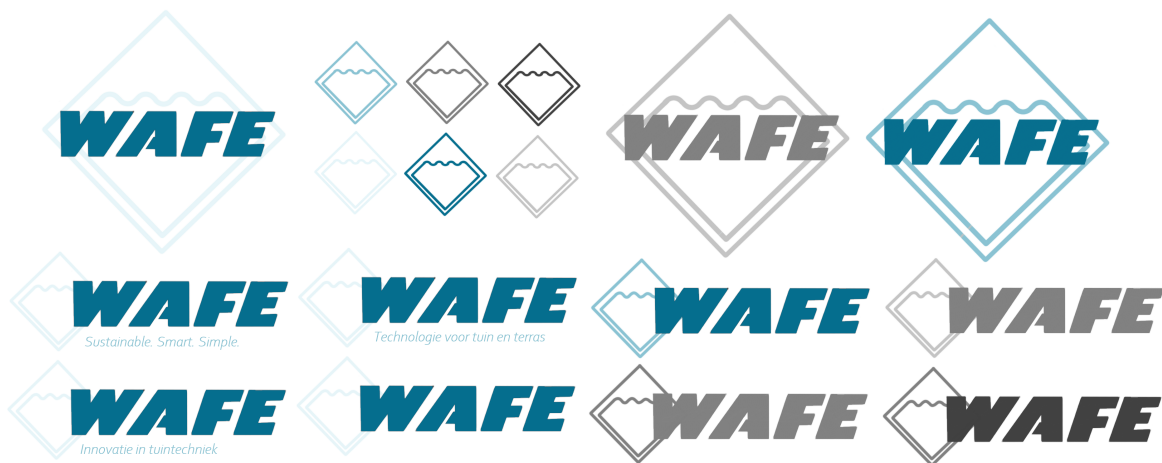


Fig. 45: Initial logo suite with different color iterations for concept 4.

- Information: A secondary font, Corbel Light, was chosen to contrast the boldness of the primary font and allow for the inclusion of sub-text in the logo. This sub-text can be used to include the slogan, indicate umbrella structure, or add descriptive key sentences to the logo.

The final logo suite made for WAFE's visual identity can be found in Figure 48 and shows the different ways the logo can be used in. On Page 8 of the Brand Manual in Appendix F.1 the logo is also shown in different color variations to widen application possibilities and allow for different background colors.

This logo suite also supports the salience layer of Keller's CBBE model by using minimalist forms and nature-inspired colors to foster quick visual recall. It also allows for a consistent yet flexible identity which is adaptable across different contexts through the different logo versions. This will ensure that even in different situations, WAFE will always stay recognizable.

Within these logo designs, hidden symbolic meaning has also been included. The light blue icon



Fig. 46: Different font ideations for concept 4.

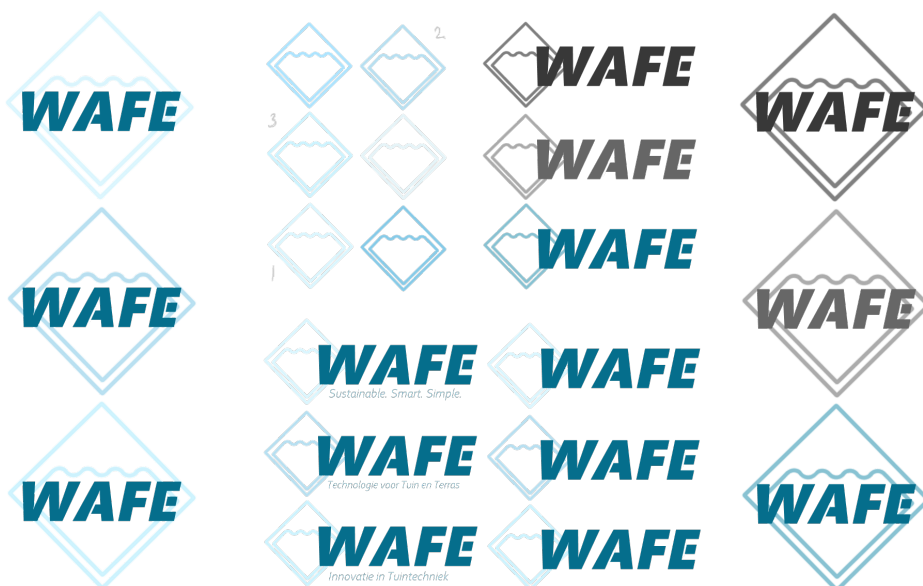


Fig. 47: Different color iterations for concept 4 to determine the color of the icon.

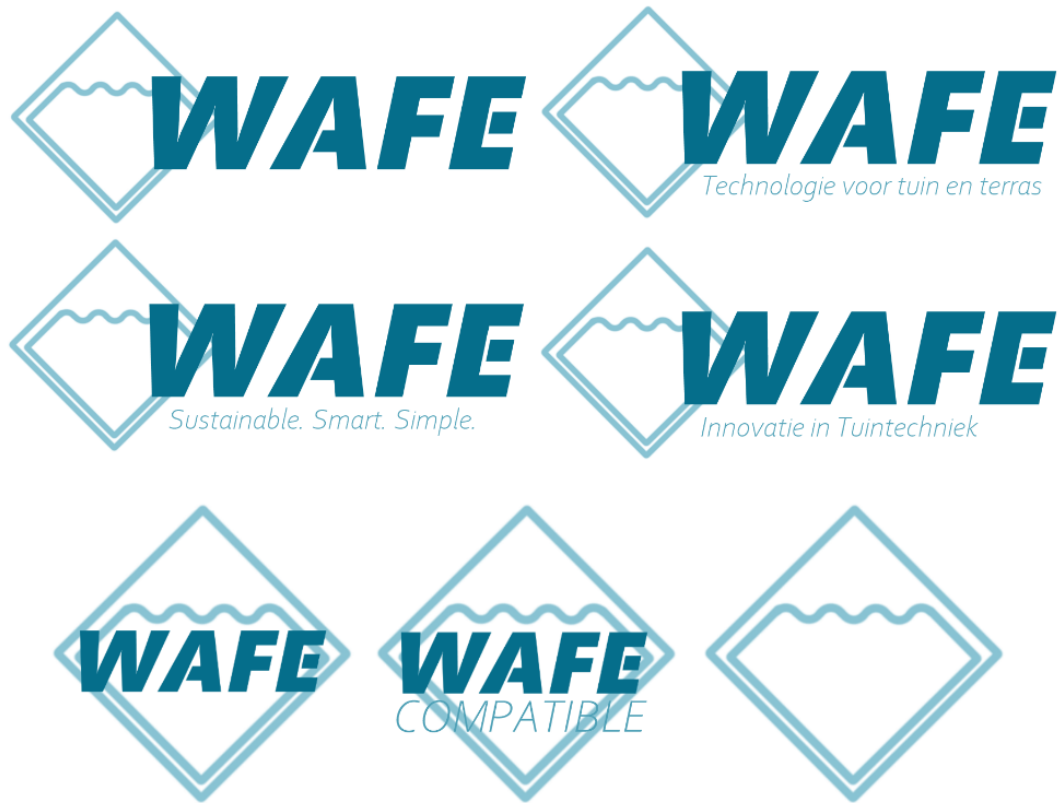


Fig. 48: WAFE's final logo suite, including a main logo, sub logo, and icon.

consists of one square representing a garden, and one half square intersected by a wave which functions as a visual metaphor for the low voltage powerline and water network that will be applied to the customers' gardens. This icon therefore captures and represents WAFE's core functionality. The wave in the icon also has a secondary use, it encourages intuitive pronunciation. The symbol nudges consumers toward reading "WAFE" as "wave," reinforcing the brand name and concept through subtle visual cues.

5.4.3 Trust

According to the second layer of the CBBE model (presented earlier in Figure 39), as well as Erdem and Swait's theory on Branding as Risk Signal, consistency in visual brand touchpoints is important to gain trust and reduce perceived risk among customers [28]. Saliency still plays a big part here, ensuring that these touchpoints communicate one cohesive message that builds recognition and nudges the consumer to buy a brand.

Though a consistent visual identity will contribute to the trust level consumers will have in WAFE, transparent messaging and endorsement by credible sources can also play a big role. Therefore, it will be important for WAFE to communicate clearly and honestly with its market, never overstating claims of competency and staying true to itself. This will help consumers gain more confidence in trying a new brand like WAFE. Leveraging credibility signals like testimonials, warranties, or certifications could also contribute to how believable WAFE's claims are, establishing even deeper trust in customers.

An example of how clear communication will be implemented stems from something mentioned by Middelbos: *“Nowadays, everyone needs to be sustainable. Therefore, for us, sustainability is a given, not an advertisement ploy, and not an option.”* To ensure this can also be communicated as such to the consumer, and ensure this comes across as truthful and transparent, tests can be performed on the water and energy saving qualities of the system and products developed by WAFE. These tests could then informatively be referred to on WAFE’s website with a clear description of the test settings, constraints, and outcomes, giving the consumer clarity and trust in WAFE’s claims. Important is to keep ethics embedded into the brand identity when performing actions like these, but to always be truthful and honest to ensure the consumer’s trust will not be broken.

The goal for WAFE is to build credibility and trustworthiness over time, which can be achieved by delivering consistent product quality, transparent communication, and responsive customer care. Consistent visual brand touchpoints will also form an important factor in this process and must express one cohesive message that builds recognition and nudges the consumer to buy WAFE. To ensure future visuals will all conform to the same visual language, the mood board has been made (Fig. 49). This mood board includes not only visuals but also keywords and key sentences associated with WAFE to make interpretation easier.

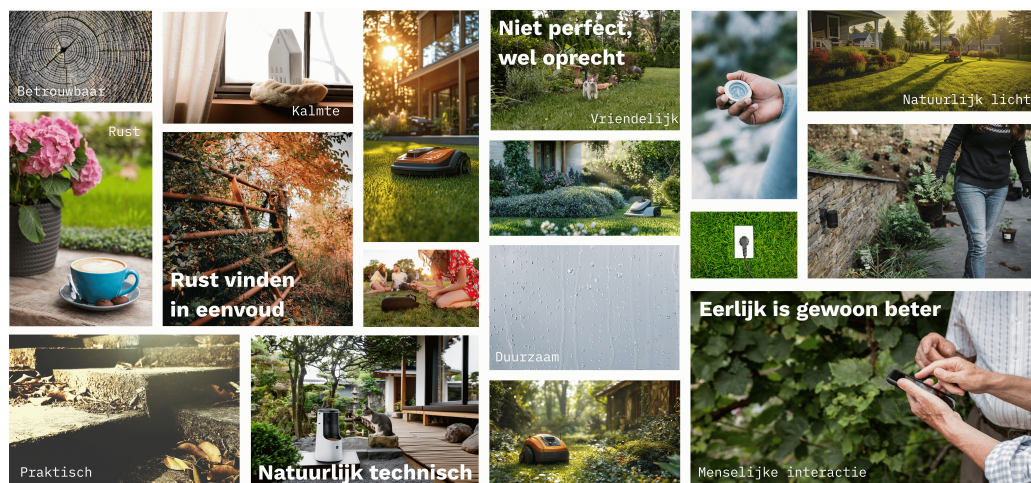


Fig. 49: Mood board reflecting WAFE’s identity.

Based on the mood board, examples of a suitable web-page design have been created to give direction to these, and other visual brand touchpoints for WAFE. With these as guidelines, future visuals can be made within the same style and appearance, even if intended for a different context. Starting with the colors used in the logo, a new color palette was made which has been implemented in these designs, (Figure 50), along with guidelines for the typography. This image corresponds with Page 20 of the Brand Manual. The examples for web page can be found on Page 24.

5.5 Immersive Brand World and Experience

The aim is to not just make a brand out of WAFE, but to build an immersive, symbolic brand environment. Inspired by Österle’s Brand Worlds concept, WAFE’s experience was designed as an immersive ecosystem. The identity, visuals, and touchpoints all reflect one cohesive story. The mood board, the values, tone, and design all contribute to a coherent “brand world” in which users can feel like they belong. Even WAFE’s brand persona, Alex, functions as a narrative map to ensure symbolic alignment



Fig. 50: Color Palette for WAFE.

across all brand touchpoints and media. Through all this WAFE will feel like more than just a brand that offers a product and becomes a brand that feels like a universe.

In this universe WAFE will create a holistic garden experience by integrating product design, digital interfaces, support services, and possibly even partner ecosystems into one unified customer journey. WAFE will be present in the customer's life from installation to daily use.

To be able to maintain this brand world and assist in growing it, co-creation can once again make a difference. It has already been used in the early stages of creating WAFE's identity, but it is also important to be implemented externally. Mäläskä et al. emphasize that in B2B branding, legitimacy comes from being seen as a partner, and not just as a provider [29]. By enabling stakeholders to shape narratives through input sessions, visual co-design, and usage storytelling, they will be able to contribute to shared meaning.

Because of WAFE's intention to work closely together with the Toveniers and have them promote and sell the brand to their customers, this method could help elevate the WAFE brand and create a more wholesome brand experience for both the Toveniers and eventual end-users. Therefore, it is important for WAFE to reinforce their collaboration through feedback loops, local advocacy, community garden projects, or even tailored solutions. For now, early-stage co-creation with Velda employees has laid the groundwork for a culture of openness and stakeholder involvement, but it is important to also keep implementing this in the future and keep involving key partners to increase brand legitimacy.

5.6 *Adaptation and Monitoring*

To maintain the brand relevance and coherence created in this chapter, ongoing evaluation will be necessary. Up til now only the bottom two layers of Keller's CBBE model have been used, solely

because the two top layers will mostly come into use once WAFE enters the market. The third layer of the pyramid questions the thoughts and feelings customers have about a brand, which is something they will only be able to develop after encountering this brand. Of course, the intention is to have their opinion of WAFE be positive to ensure they will consider buying its products. However, as the brand is still in its conceptual phase and not yet marketed, this is not something that can already be determined.

Similarly, the top layer of the CBBE model is about the resonance customers have with the brand and reflects their feelings about it. According to Keller [31] this layer becomes important when the customer has achieved a high level of recognition and trust with the brand, and they have strong, preferential, and unique brand associations towards it. So, this layer reflects WAFE's future loyal customers, who will even act as ambassadors for the brand out of their own volition, for example, when recommending WAFE's systems to their friends and family. This layer has four different categories of Brand Resonance, loyalty, emotional connection, community feeling, and active brand participation, and the goal of this layer is to strengthen the customer-brand relationship in each of these categories continuously.

To maintain metrics of the CBBE model like brand recall, associations, judgements, and emotional attachment, it will be possible to uphold WAFE's brand relevance and coherence. Simultaneously, Kapferer's theory emphasizes that WAFE will need to monitor its cultural alignment between internal behavior and external messaging. This is important to ensure all communication remains coherent and cohesive. To ensure WAFE will be able to continue evolving with its audience, while still staying authentic and true to its values, it is advised that feedback loops will be implemented through customer service, surveys, and digital analytics.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis set out to answer the question: *"How can WAFE position itself in the competitive landscape of smart garden management to achieve lasting market relevance and growth?"* Through extensive research into market trends, the competitive landscape, customer preferences, branding theories, strategic positioning, and market entry frameworks, the answer to this question eventually consolidated into a strategic brand manual, complete with an actionable roadmap for long-term growth. This manual is not merely intended as a visual identity guide, but as a strategic tool intended to help WAFE establish itself as a compelling, differentiated presence in an already saturated market. It offers direction not only for market entry but for shaping WAFE's identity, product experience, customer relations, and long-term brand trajectory.

The analyses, theories, and frameworks explored not only laid the basis for WAFE's branding strategy, but also offered insights into other future directions and recommendations for WAFE. The actionable insights drafted from the market research, together with recommendations drawn throughout the thesis will provide direction for many future decisions WAFE will need to make.

In answering the first sub question, *what key factors influence the adoption of a new brand like WAFE among customers and gardeners in a market dominated by established players*, it became clear that the decision for consumers to adopt a new brand or product are not merely functional, but also emotional. Brand loyalty among incumbent competitors like In-lite and Gardena is high among gardeners, especially due to the longstanding trust these companies have built among the market through their consistent quality. WAFE, as a new company, will have to overcome this initial switching barrier created by these competitors. However, this loyalty customers show to these established brands is not impenetrable. The survey results show that the majority of gardeners who participated would consider switching to a new brand if it could provide proof of its quality, reliability, ease of use, and overall superiority to the the brands they are loyal to. The price of the system, while it will still play a factor, was mentioned as only secondary to the quality of products in this survey. The gardeners appeared to be willing to potentially pay a higher price for products they knew to be robust, easily installable, and beneficial to their end users. WAFE will however need to provide proof of its system's quality to entice gardeners to adopt the brand. The consistency of this quality will then allow WAFE to gain trust itself, building loyal relationships with the gardeners and end users. The insights into the gardeners' opinions guided the development for WAFE's positioning. A value driven brand that merges innovation with reliability, with a hybrid portfolio that abides to different price segments through customization and constant, reliable quality.

The second sub-question, *"what strategic relationship should exist between WAFE and Velda, and how could this affect WAFE's identity and positioning,"* was answered through a more structural approach. This sub-question was posed by WAFE's founders and management of Velda to determine whether WAFE should exist as a brand under Velda, a daughter company, or as a fully separate entity. The answer to this question was quite naturally formed through capabilities and intentions behind WAFE, combined with research into different suitable strategic business structures. Since WAFE was initially founded using Velda's resources and personnel, without having its own employees, and was simultaneously created with the ambition to surpass Velda in scope and scale, it can be classified as a *strategic spin-off*. By leveraging Velda's staff and resources in early development stages, while simultaneously developing its own identity and products, WAFE will be able to benefit from Velda's industry experience and ensuring that it can evolve into its own entity over time. This way, WAFE can

create its own direction, market, values, and voice. This relationship has been carefully integrated into the roadmap section of the brand manual, ensuring that WAFE's growth can occur without becoming overshadowed by its origin.

The third and final sub-question asked "*what market conditions, challenges, and strategic options shape WAFE's opportunities for entry, differentiation, and long-term growth?*" To answer this, frameworks like Porter's Five Forces, competitive SWOT analyses, a PESTLE analysis, and Porter's Four Corners were used to determine the landscape in which WAFE will find itself after establishment. The frameworks revealed not only a market shaped by strong competitors and high entry barriers, but also one with a significant *market gap*. No brand currently offers a single, integrated ecosystem that includes lighting, irrigation, and water management in a unified, modular, customizable, and compatible system. This is WAFE's competitive advantage. At the same time, the increasing cultural demand for sustainable and low-maintenance solutions provides a good environment for WAFE's proposed identity as a smart, green, and forward-thinking brand. However, this opportunity will only materialize if WAFE proves that its system is not only conceptually sound, but is also practical and trustworthy. This need for credibility from an early stage of WAFE's development is why branding was not treated as a surface level technique to improve marketing, but as a central strategic mechanism.

The brand manual, developed in response to all the different findings of this thesis, offers a complete strategy for WAFE in terms of identity formation, product alignment, brand voice, and long-term growth. It includes actionable recommendations embedded in its identity and roadmap, which allows for gradual scaling and dynamic adaptation. The different branding theories, from Kapferer's Brand identity Prism to Keller's CBBE model, were not only used conceptually but translated into different aspects of the brand manual. The user experience, tone, personality, and positioning of the brand have not been determined by simple preference or train of thought, they come from proven and reputable theories in the field of branding. The result became a brand that should be able to resonate emotionally with users and position itself symbolically as more than just another garden product.

The core variable of WAFE's future lies in its ability to earn trust. It should do this by not just telling people who it is, but by showing them. Social initiatives and collaborations with community gardens will allow people to witness the system in action before buying it themselves. The emphasis should be for WAFE to demonstrate its system through convincing gardeners to become Toveniers, or showing the customer pilot installations. The system's value must be seen, first hand, by those who will use and recommend it. This will help the brand gain traction in early stages and help attract customers. WAFE will likely only exist if its promise is validated in practice. Loyal gardeners, skeptical customers, or users who already possess a niche ecosystem will require proof of WAFE's promises before they will accept the emotional and monetary switching costs.

Still, certain limitations remain. This thesis was constrained by the inability to test the brand or system in a fully developed market setting. If potential Toveniers had already been scouted, they could have been included into the research and design processes, expanding more on Mäläskä et al.'s theories on co-creation. Similarly, while extensive research was done into customer preferences, future studies could benefit from more detailed segmentation regarding age, garden size, and regional/cultural preferences. These aspects could influence WAFE's future brand adaptations, though these aspects will be of bigger relevance in the product design. If WAFE were to ever enter markets with a largely different culture, new analysis would definitely be recommended to ensure WAFE's identity will conform to the expectations and requirements of this market.

Important recommendations for WAFE to continue with and use the results of this thesis have partly already been determined in the form of strategic recommendations and manageable actions. That the system must become inherently modular is important because of the recommended hybrid portfolio to cover different price segments and to cover the needs of different kinds and sizes of gardens. Even in these different price classes, the research strongly supports a strategy of quality over price. This means, that even if the portfolio has a tiered structure (basic, standard, premium), quality of the products should be of utmost importance. It would be better to differentiate on functions, with premium products having more specialized and premium functions than basic products, than to differentiate on quality and gain a bad reputation through faulty lower-tier products.

With the Toveniers as brand ambassadors for WAFE, it would be recommended to implement a form of certification program that can assess gardeners while simultaneously being able to educate them and promote the system. This would also provide WAFE with testimonials from garden experts, promoting the brand even further and making it easier for consumers to trust in WAFE. For even better recognition, communication, and community early on, WAFE would also be recommended to achieve a strong online presence to not only broaden brand reach, but legitimize WAFE as technologically forward and future facing brand. This online presence could be enhanced by achieving certificates to demonstrate credibility in sustainability, innovation, and quality standards. Examples could be eco-certifications, digital trust seals, or recognition from the Tovenier. This could further strengthen consumer confidence and better distinguish WAFE in its competitive garden management market.

With regards to the brand manual and brand identity itself, WAFE would be recommended to try and build the brand till at least the third phase of the roadmap, the umbrella brand. By taking the brand to this stage, WAFE would possess a substantial and solid foundation in the market, which will create a significant barrier for competitors and new entrants to the market. Furthermore, WAFE should communicate as a singular and holistic brand, which would be possible through consulting a brand manual for all brand touchpoints. This brand manual could be the one created during this thesis, or an adjusted version were that to be preferred after further establishment of the brand, but using one will definitely benefit WAFE throughout its entire existence. In doing so, WAFE will ensure that it stays true to its core identity and its core values regardless of potential changes in the market or trends.

Other, smaller, recommendations with regard to the research and findings discussed in this thesis, include:

- Analyze Astrapool if WAFE decides to include pool products in its portfolio.
- Analyze Husqvarna if WAFE decides to develop its own robotic lawnmower.
- Implement co-creation and stakeholder involvement in future developments to increase legitimacy.
- Revisit the performed PESTLE analysis for big management decisions regarding planning, strategy, or organizational change.
- Redo the PESTLE analysis when entering the market in a different country to ensure environmental factors that influence the brand are discovered.
- Continuously validate product-market fit to make sure WAFE can fine-tune its offerings, respond to market resistance, and keep customers satisfied.

In conclusion, the question of how WAFE can best position itself in its competitive market has been answered through the creation of a coherent, research-driven brand identity and market strategy. WAFE should enter the market as a high value, integrated, and emotionally engaging brand. It should communicate simplicity, reliability, and eco-consciousness through every interaction, from design to installation. Its success depends not only on its technological capabilities and innovation, but on its ability to build a brand world that people want to be a part of. The brand manual and roadmap serve as a guide to achieve this, but not as a fixed solution. The outcome of this thesis is a living framework that will be able to grow and evolve alongside WAFE itself. The basis has been made, and through continuous monitoring and adaptation the brand and roadmap will continue to evolve and grow, as WAFE does.

DISCLAIMERS

Shared Survey Results

Because the survey in the Market Analysis was developed and performed in collaboration with Jelte Overzet for his Bachelor Assignment into "*A Central Hub for a Smart Garden System*," there might be overlap in the documentation and results from this part of the two papers. As both researches were performed at the same time and for the same brand, overlap might exist. However, other than the survey no information was shared and/or replicated.

AI

During the preparation of this work the author used Chat-GPT in order to summarize and reshape knowledge for better overview. For complete transparency the prompts and outcomes used have been added in the respective Appendices. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the work. AI has not been used to acquire new knowledge, only as a tool to restructure known information.

Language/grammar/processor AI tools that have been used to ensure professional writing are:

- Word
- Overleaf Writefull
- Chat-GPT
- Grammarly

A few examples of how Chat-GPT has been used for grammar/language/conciseness are:

1. *Is this a correct way to put it? the further referenced part. it is for a thesis at university level: When the company was first founded in 1969, it was only a small aquarium shop, but through the passions of F. Veldhuis it was quickly expanded to include production facilities under the name Velda B.V. (further referenced to as Velda).*

Answer: *our sentence is mostly clear and well-structured, but the phrase "further referenced to as Velda" is slightly off in formal academic English. A more appropriate phrasing for a university-level thesis would be: "...under the name Velda B.V. (hereinafter referred to as Velda)." or, more simply: "...under the name Velda B.V. (hereafter Velda)."*

2. *Help me with this sentence: With the performed analyses, methods, and frameworks combined, and looking at the key takeaways that have resulted from these macro, meso , and micro level orientation strategies, a list of strategic recommendations regarding WAFE's positioning, market penetration and actions can be arranged.*

Answer: *Your sentence is conceptually strong, but it's a bit long and structurally complex, which can reduce clarity—especially in academic writing. Here's a polished, more formal version: Refined version: Based on the combined analyses, methods, and frameworks—and considering the key takeaways from the macro, meso, and micro level orientation strategies—a set of strategic recommendations can be formulated regarding WAFE's positioning, market penetration, and proposed actions.*

3. structure this: Philips Hue Outdoors wants to be leader in smart outdoor lighting cause more people want connected and customizable and energy saving outdoor lights. They also want to grow smart home ecosystem so outside lights work with Alexa, Google Home, apps and all smart home devices for security, ambiance and convenience. People want to customize colors, schedules, automate with motion sensors and cameras, strategy is to offer wide range of outdoor smart lights fully integrated with indoor smart lighting system so users can control by apps or voice assistants. They focus on security lighting and decorative lighting. lights use LED technology for energy efficiency, last longer and use less power, which customers like because they want sustainable products. assume smart home adoption will keep growing and customers want more automation, just like inside. Also that customers want customization and control to make moods and improve security. Their strengths are in smart lighting with remote control, automation and color customization, plus strong brand and global distribution. But they don't do other garden solutions like irrigation or pond management which might limit them for people wanting all-in-one garden solutions like WAFE will offer. They also have both functional and aesthetically pleasing designs

Answer: Motivations (Drivers):

Market leadership: Aim to lead smart outdoor lighting market due to rising demand for connected, customizable, energy-efficient solutions Ecosystem expansion: Integrate outdoor lighting with Alexa, Google Home, and smart home platforms Personalization: Consumer interest in color customization, schedules, and automation features Current Strategy: Product range: Wide variety of outdoor smart lights integrated with indoor system Focus areas: Security lighting and decorative ambiance Energy efficiency: Use of LED tech for sustainability and longer life Assumptions: Market growth: Continued smart home adoption and demand for connected outdoor lighting Customer priorities: High demand for customization and automation to improve mood and security Capabilities: Tech expertise: Remote control, automation, color customization in smart lighting Brand strength: Strong global brand and distribution network Limitations: No offerings beyond lighting like irrigation or pond management Design: Functional and aesthetically pleasing outdoor lighting

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APPENDICES

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B. COMPETITOR COMPARISON

B.1 Automated Products/Systems from Competitors



B.2 Large Comparison Table

Comprehensive Comparison Summary of Pump, Lighting, Water Management, and Irrigation Control Systems													
Feature	Pond Products						Lighting				Irrigation		
	OASE EGC System	AquaForte (Sibo Fluidra) External Controller	Evolution Aqua EasyPod Automatic	Aquaking (Bimex B.V.) Automatic Water Refill	AstralPool Fluidra Connect	Paulmann Plug & Shine LED	Philips Hue Outdoors System	In-Lite	Bega Smart	Gardena (Husqarna) Automatic Irrigation	Rainbird Automatic Irrigation	Solar-aqua Automatic Irrigation	Kärcher Automatic Irrigation
Remote Control	Full remote control via app (Wi-Fi + Cloud for remote access)	Manual adjustment only	Automatic filtration system, no remote control	No remote control	Full remote control via app	Limited remote control via remote	Full remote control via app and smart home integration	Controlled with Bluetooth app, but no remote access away from home	Full remote control via app (Wi-Fi integration for remote access)	Full remote control via app (Wi-Fi + Cloud for remote access)	Full remote control via app (Wi-Fi + Cloud for remote access)	Manual or remote control via timers and apps	Limited remote control, usually through proprietary timers
Automation	Advanced automation and scheduling via app	No automation features	Automatic water cleaning and filtration	Automatic water level control	Advanced automation for pools and water features	Automates lighting on/off schedules and zones	Advanced automation via app	Timers and schedules through app, no advanced automation	Advanced automation via app, including schedules and zoning for lighting	Fully automated with scheduling and weather-based adjustments	Fully automated, can integrate with rain sensors and schedules	Automated irrigation with scheduling and timers	Basic automation features, including timers
Monitoring	Real-time monitoring and alerts through app	No monitoring, manual adjustments	No real-time monitoring	No monitoring	Real-time monitoring of pool systems	No monitoring	Real-time status updates and control through app	No energy monitoring features	No real-time monitoring, but manual controls and status updates through the app are available	Monitors water usage, soil moisture sensors available	Monitors water usage, rain sensors available	Limited monitoring based on water usage	No active monitoring, but can be paired with timers and controllers
Installation & Setup	More complex setup with app and Wi-Fi integration	Simple, plug-and-play installation	Requires more complex installation for full automation	Simple setup, connects to refill systems	Professional setup required for full control	Simple plug-and-play with wired lights	Easy setup with Philips Hue Bridge	Easy installation with plug-and-play low-voltage wiring	Requires professional installation	Simple DIY setup, integrates with smart systems and sensors	Simple setup with Wi-Fi or rain sensor integration	Simple setup, requires connection to water source	Simple installation, uses proprietary controllers
Cost (per market)	Higher cost for system and compatible devices	More affordable, lower initial investment	Mid-range cost, includes pump and filtration system	Affordable, specific to water refill systems	High-end pricing for pools and complex water systems	Moderate pricing for outdoor lighting systems	Higher cost, but integrates with smart home ecosystems	Mid-to-high range	High-end pricing	Moderate pricing, expands with sensors and additional zones	Mid-range pricing, expands with smart features and sensors	Affordable, expands based on coverage area	Affordable pricing, though less feature-rich than premium options
Device Compatibility	Integrated ecosystem for OASE devices, limited compatibility with non-OASE	Mostly AquaForte pumps, limited to non-OASE AquaForte devices	Works with Evolution Aqua pumps and systems	Only works with water level control systems	Works with AstralPool equipment, pools, and water features	Compatible with Paulmann outdoor lights	Compatible with Philips Hue and other smart home ecosystems	Limited to proprietary components, works with Homey for broader integration	Fully compatible with Bega products, integrates with smart home systems	Compatible with Gardena products, integrates with smart sensors	Compatible with Rainbird irrigation products, works with smart systems	Compatible with Solaqua devices, works with timers	Compatible with Kärcher and irrigation systems
Energy/Water Efficiency	Adjustable speeds and time usage for energy savings	Adjustable pump speeds for energy savings	Low energy consumption through efficient filtration processes	No direct impact on energy use	Optimizes pool energy use	Energy-saving LED technology	Energy-efficient outdoor lighting with automation	Energy-efficient due to LED technology and 12V low-voltage system	Energy-saving LED technology and automated scheduling	Water-saving features with soil moisture sensors and rain detectors	Water-saving features via rain sensors and smart irrigation	Water-saving with basic timers and controllers	Basic water-saving timers and rain sensor compatibility
													Optimizes pool energy use
													Adjustable speeds and time usage for energy savings

<i>Ease of Use</i>	Advanced features, requires learning the app and system	Very simple, manual control	Easy to use once installed, minimal user maintenance	Extremely simple, requires no intervention	Intuitive app, but pool systems may require expertise	Easy to use with zone-based control of lighting	Highly user-friendly with app-based controls	Intuitive app with dimming, grouping, and scheduling functionality	Highly user-friendly app, despite advanced features	User-friendly app or manual programming options	User-friendly app or manual scheduling options	Easy to use with simple automation and timers	Simple use with manual or timer-based control	Intuitive app, but pool systems may require expertise	Advanced features, requires learning of the app
<i>Lighting Control</i>	Full integration with OASE lighting	No lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	Comprehensive outdoor lighting control	Advanced lighting control with dimming, color, and scheduling	Advanced dimming and grouping options, but restricted by Bluetooth range	Comprehensive lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	No lighting control	Integrates with (future) Wate lighting, and different brands
<i>Filtration Management</i>	Controls filtration systems like filters and skimmers	No filtration control	Automatic filtration and cleaning processes	No filtration control	Manages pool filtration and cleaning systems	No filtration control	No filtration control	Not applicable	No filtration control	No filtration control	No filtration control	No filtration control	No filtration control	Manages pool filtration systems and cleaning systems	Controls filtration systems like filters and skimmers
<i>Water Features</i>	Controls water features like fountains, waterfalls	Controls water flow rate only	No water feature control	Automatic refill of water systems	Full control over pool water features and management	No water feature control	No water feature control	Not applicable	No water feature control	Provides precise watering for lawns	Provides watering for large areas and advanced sprinklers	Provides simple watering control for garden areas	Provides basic watering features for gardens	Full control over pool water features and management	Controls water features like fountains, waterfalls
<i>Oxygen/Aeration Control</i>	Integrates with EAC for air control in ponds	No aeration control	No aeration control	No aeration control	Oxygen and air control in pool systems	No aeration control	No aeration control	Not applicable	No aeration control	No aeration control	No aeration control	No aeration control	No aeration control	Oxygen and air control in pool systems	Controls oxygen pumps and aeration devices
<i>Scalability</i>	Highly scalable system with multiple device integration	Limited, works with a single pump	Limited scalability, tied to filtration unit	No scalability, single function	Scalable for large pool and water feature systems	Can scale with additional Paulmann lights	Scalable with other Philips Hue devices	Limited scalability due to transformer capacity and Bluetooth range	Highly scalable, supports large setups with multiple zones	Highly scalable, zones and sensors can be added	Highly scalable with zones and smart integrations	Scalable with zones and timers	Limited scalability, works mainly with Kärcher systems	Scalable for large pool and water feature systems	Highly scalable system with multiple device integration
<i>Wi-Fi / Smart Home Integration</i>	Full Wi-Fi and smart integration through app	No Wi-Fi or smart home integration	No Wi-Fi or smart home integration	No Wi-Fi or smart home integration	Requires app and cloud access, integrates well with smart home	No Wi-Fi, but remote control possible via proprietary system	Full Wi-Fi and smart home integration through Honey	No direct Wi-Fi, limited smart home integration through Honey	Full Wi-Fi and smart home integration through app	Full smart home integration via app (Alexa, Google Assistant, etc.)	Full smart home integration via app (Alexa, Google Assistant, etc.)	Limited integration via timers and controllers	No smart home integration, mostly manual control	Requires app and cloud access, integrates well with smart home	Wi-Fi less system, but integratable with smart home appliances
<i>Located</i>	Hörstel, Germany	Veghel, Netherlands	Wigan, United Kingdom	Rosmalen, Netherlands	Sabadell, Spain	Springe, Germany	Eindhoven (Signify) and Amsterdam (Philips), Netherlands	Gorinchem, Netherlands	Menden, Germany	Ulm, Germany	Aznusa, California, USA	Antwerpen, Belgium	Winnenden, Germany	Sabadell, Spain	Enschede, Netherlands

C. COMPLETE COMPETITIVE SWOT ANALYSES

C.1 SWOT Oase

Strengths:

- Brand reputation and quality: Oase is well-known in the pond and water management industry. It has a reputation for high-quality and high-end products.
- Innovation and technological edge: The company is constantly innovating with regard to sustainability, creating more environmentally-friendly solutions like energy-efficient pumps and advanced filtration systems.
- Wide product range: Due to the wide product portfolio, ranging from pumps and filters to fountains and lighting, Oase attracts a large customer base.
- Sustainability and Environmental impact: The Eco-friendly products of Oase appeal to customers who are environmentally active, which has been a growing trend over the past years [40].

Weaknesses:

- High price point: The products Oase offers are generally more expensive than those of competitors, which may limit the appeal to more price sensitive customers.
- Niche market presence: Oase has a strong presence in Europe, but has a limited reach in other regions, making it more vulnerable for local competitors.
- Dependence on specialist retailers: Oase relies on specific distribution channels (niche retailers and specialized stores), which could limit their market reach into mainstream retail (home improvement or department stores) and a broader audience.

Opportunities:

- Growing demand for sustainable solutions: An increased global emphasis on being environmentally and sustainably active offers an opportunity for Oase to promote their Eco-friendly technologies.
- Expansion into new markets: Urbanization and increased interest in landscape and water features in Latin America and Asia offer the potential for new market possibilities [41][42].
- Smart and automated technologies: The integration of IoT, AI and automation in water management can allow Oase to develop even more advanced products.

Threats:

- Intense competition: With the pond and water management industry being competitive as it is, established and new players could impact Oase's market share.
- Economic downturns: Economic slowdowns may cause customers to spend less money on landscaping and garden features, affecting sales.
- Environmental regulations: Environmental regulations keep evolving, causing Oase to adapt its products according to standards continuously, increasing costs.
- Climate change: Changes in weather patterns may reduce demands for certain products, especially in regions with or periods of water scarcity.

C.2 SWOT Gardena

Strengths:

- Strong brand reputation: Gardena is well-known for its quality garden tools and reliable irrigation systems.
- Innovative Irrigation Solutions: The innovative and smart watering systems of Gardena are market leaders.
- Wide product range: Gardena offers a large range of gardening products, from lawn mowers to pruning tools and to smart irrigation systems.
- Sustainability focus: the water-efficient irrigation focus aligns with Eco-friendly gardening trends [2].

Weaknesses:

- High price point: Compared to other brands in the same market, Gardena products can be seen as more expensive, limiting accessibility to price-sensitive customers.
- Limited presence in non-European markets: Although Gardena has a strong market presence in Europe, it is not yet as established in North America and Asia [43].
- Dependence on seasonal sales: Sales for Gardena will fluctuate due to seasonal demands, particularly in regions with shorter gardening seasons.

Opportunities:

- Expansion in emerging markets: Growing interest in gardening in markets such as Asia and Latin America offers growth potential [42][41].
- Smart gardening: Rising demand for smart, automated garden solutions opens doors for new product development.
- Eco-friendly products: Increasing customer focus on sustainable products matches with Gardena's water-efficient solutions.

Threats:

- Competitive market: There is strong competition from global brands like Bosch (with regards to their market share in garden products, less in the irrigation sector).
- Climate change: Irregular weather patterns could reduce gardening activities in certain regions, keeping customers away.
- Economic downturns: When regions are in economic trouble, they might spend less on gardening products or other unnecessary products, impacting sales.

C.3 SWOT Philips Hue (Outdoors)

Strengths:

- Technological leadership: Philips Hue is a strong brand in smart lighting, with a strong reputation for quality and innovation in the indoors market, which increases their reputation for the outdoors market.
- Seamless smart home integration: Philips Hue works well together with smart home systems like Alexa and Google Home.
- Energy efficiency: The lighting is energy-efficient, which appeals to Eco-conscious consumers.

Weaknesses:

- Premium pricing: Philips Hue products are often priced quite high, which may limit their market penetration.
- Dependency on stable Wi-Fi: The Philips Hue products require a strong and consistent Wi-Fi connection to work. This can definitely be challenging in outdoor settings, especially in large gardens.
- Limited outdoor product range: Philips Hue has less options compared to competitors that offer a broader range of outdoor lighting solutions.

Opportunities:

- Growing smart home market: The rising adoption of smart home devices [44] increases demand for integrated outdoor lighting.
- Expansion into commercial spaces: There is potential for Philips Hue to try and expand into outdoor commercial lighting for, for example, restaurants, hotels and public areas.
- Sustainability trends: Consumers' increased preference for energy-efficient and smart lighting fits with Philips Hue's portfolio.

Threats:

- Intense competition: Competing brands like LIFX (mainly outside of Europe), Ring and others provide similar lighting solutions and security systems at competitive prices.
- Rapid technological change: The smart home industry evolves quickly and continuously, making it important to stay ahead and keep being innovative.
- Privacy concerns: With increased integration into smart homes, there is potential for privacy concerns around data security and user tracking [45].

C.4 SWOT BEGA

Strengths:

- **Premium Brand Reputation:** BEGA is known for its high-quality, durable and aesthetically pleasing outdoor lighting products.
- **Innovative Design:** The company emphasizes sleek, modern design combined with energy-efficient technology. This is attractive to architects and designers.
- **Sustainability Focus:** BEGA offers energy-efficient and long-lasting LED solutions. This aligns with growing environmental awareness amongst western populations.
- **Diverse Product Range:** BEGA covers a wide spectrum of outdoor lighting needs, including urban spaces, residential and commercial projects.

Weaknesses

- **High Price Point:** BEGA's premium pricing can be a barrier in price-sensitive markets. Which limits its accessibility to a broader customer base.
- **Limited Retail Presence:** BEGA products are often found in specialized channels and not in mainstream retail stores, this may reduce its visibility to general consumers.
- **Narrow Target Market:** The brand mostly caters to high-end markets, such as commercial developers, architects and luxury homeowners, which could limit scalability in the mass market.

Opportunities

- **Sustainability Trend:** With rising demand for eco-friendly and energy-efficient products, BEGA can leverage its focus on LED lighting and sustainable design to attract more environmentally-conscious consumers.
- **Expansion in Emerging Markets:** Expanding into markets like Asia, Latin America or Africa, where urbanization is driving demand for infrastructure lighting, could present some growth opportunities.
- **Smart Lighting Solutions:** Integrating smart technology into outdoor lighting, such as IoT-enabled systems for remote control and automation, would align BEGA with the growing smart home trends.

Threats

- **Intense Competition:** BEGA faces competition from both high-end lighting brands and more affordable alternatives that offer similar functionality, potentially putting pressure on market share.
- **Economic Downturns:** In tough economic conditions, spending on premium outdoor lighting for commercial or residential projects may decline, affecting sales.
- **Technological Disruption:** Rapid changes in lighting and smart technologies mean BEGA must continue to innovate to remain competitive, which can strain resources.

C.5 SWOT In-lite

Strengths:

- **Innovative Design and Quality:** In-Lite is known for its typical Dutch design, focused on weather resistance and aesthetics.
- **User-Friendly Systems:** With a plug-and-play 12-volt outdoor lighting system, they make installation straightforward for consumers, as no specialized electricians are necessary.
- **Sustainability Commitment:** In-Lite aims to minimize environmental impact through energy-efficient products.
- **Strong Market Presence:** With over 20 years in the industry, In-Lite has established a solid reputation, which can also be seen through the survey among gardeners. During these years they have developed a diverse product range catering to various outdoor lighting needs.

Weaknesses:

- **Limited Global Reach:** Active in around 20 countries, its global distribution is not as extensive as some competitors [46].
- **Niche Market Focus:** Premium products which may not appeal to budget-conscious consumers.
- **Dependence on Outdoor Living Trends:** Product demand is closely linked to consumer interest in outdoor living spaces, making In-Lite vulnerable to changes in lifestyle trends.

Opportunities:

- **Expansion into Emerging Markets:** Growing urbanization and increasing interest in outdoor aesthetics presents opportunities for In-Lite.
- **Integration of Smart Technology:** Further developing incorporated smart features to attract technologically active consumers and align with the smart home trend.
- **Collaborations with Landscape Designers:** Partnering with professionals in landscaping and architecture could enhance In-Lite's product visibility in high-end residential areas.

Threats:

- **Intense Competition:** The outdoor lighting market is competitive. Several players offer similar products.
- **Economic Downturns:** Economic challenges can lead to less consumer spending on non-essential home improvements. This could affect sales.
- **Technological Advancements:** Rapid technological changes require ongoing research and development to keep up with industry standards and consumer expectations.

D. COMPLETE FOUR CORNERS MODELS

D.1 Four Corners Model Oase

- Motivators (Drivers)
 - Current Focus: Oase specializes in pond and water management features. Their core motivation is to maintain a leadership position in their niche of pond products. They provide high-quality pond solutions including pumps, filters, decorative elements like fountains, lighting for water features and spotlights for other garden attributes.
 - Market Growth: Oase is driven by trends in outdoor water landscaping, particularly the trend for more aesthetic and sustainable garden solutions. Their motivation focuses on expanding product lines to cater to this premium, eco-conscious segment of the market.
 - Global Expansion: Oase taps into markets where gardens with ponds and pond features are growing in popularity. Here people spend more on landscaping. Oase aims to continue and further develop its global presence.
- Current Strategy
 - Water-Centric Ecosystem: Oase offers a complete ecosystem for ponds including water pumps, filtration systems, decorative features, and lights. This integrated approach caters to customers who seek a full pond maintenance solution.
 - Smart and Eco-Friendly Solutions: Oase has been investing in eco-friendly, water-saving products and smart technology with respect to ponds and pond lighting. This allows for enhanced control and automation for their customers.
 - Specialization in Premium Products: Oase continues to focus on high-end and premium solutions, offering durable and well-designed landscaping products. This focus allows them to maintain a loyal, high-spending customer base.
- Assumptions
 - Demand for Specialized Solutions: Oase likely assumes that customers will continue to prefer specialized, high-quality solutions for water features. They assume these customers value expertise and reliability.
 - Niche Expertise as a Differentiator: They assume that their deep expertise in water feature management will keep them ahead in their niche, differentiating them from broader garden ecosystem providers.
- Capabilities
 - Technological Expertise: Oase's strength lies in its technological leadership in pond filtration, water circulation and management systems, with integration of smart technologies.
 - Brand Recognition in Water Landscaping: Oase's brand is highly regarded in the water feature market. This strong reputation helps them dominate this niche market.
 - Limited Scope Beyond Water Features: While they have a strong position in water features and pond management, expanding into broader garden management such as irrigation or general lighting (opposed to the garden spotlights and pond lights they currently offer), would require new partnerships, capabilities or development.

D.2 Four Corners Model Gardena

- Motivations (Drivers)

- Market Leadership in Irrigation: Gardena is highly motivated to maintain its dominant position in the garden irrigation system market, driven by the increasing demand for water-efficient gardening solutions.
- Growth in Smart Gardening: Gardena is a leader in smart garden technology. They want to lead the smart irrigation sector while also expanding into broader garden automation, including robotic lawnmowers and plant sensors.
- Sustainability: Gardena is motivated by the global trend towards sustainable gardening practices, so they position themselves as the go-to brand for efficient water use and eco-friendly solutions.

- Current Strategy

- Smart Irrigation Systems: Gardena's main strategy revolves around offering automated, smart irrigation systems that save water and reduce manual labor. This is why their smart system integrates garden irrigation, sensors and controllers for an automated experience.
- Product Diversification: While irrigation remains their main focus, Gardena has diversified into complementary garden solutions. This includes garden tools and robotic lawnmowers, to provide a more comprehensive smart garden ecosystem.
- Strategic Partnerships: Gardena seeks partnerships with other smart home technology providers to integrate its irrigation solutions into broader smart home ecosystems. Examples are Google Home and Amazon Alexa.

- Assumptions

- Dominance in Irrigation: Gardena assumes that its established position and reputation in irrigation will continue to keep competitors at bay. They may believe that the customer will continue to view Gardena as the leading expert in water management for gardens.
- Technological Superiority: Gardena likely assumes that its advanced technology in smart irrigation and different water-saving innovations create a high entry barrier for competitors like WAFE, maintaining their leadership in this space.

- Capabilities

- Technological Leadership: Gardena's smart irrigation systems and other, broader garden automation tools give them a strong competitive advantage in irrigation management and overall garden automation.
- Strong Distribution Network: Gardena's established distribution channels, both physical (shops) and online (website), ensure that they can quickly scale new products.
- Potential to Expand: Gardena has the abilities expand further into broader garden automation, but irrigation remains their strongest area of expertise

D.3 Four Corners Model Philips Hue (Outdoors)

- Motivations (Drivers)
 - Market Leadership in Smart Outdoor Lighting: Philips Hue Outdoors is driven by the goal of becoming the leading provider of smart lighting solutions for outdoor spaces. Their motivation stems from the growing demand for affordable, customizable and energy-efficient outdoor lighting systems.
 - Expansion of the Smart Home Ecosystem: As smart homes become more popular, Philips Hue Outdoors is motivated to ensure that outdoor spaces are combined into the wider smart home ecosystem. This includes providing solutions for outdoor ambiance, security and convenience.
 - Customization and Automation Trends: Philips Hue Outdoors is driven by the fact that consumers are getting more interested in personalized outdoor experiences. Examples of this are customizable lighting schedules, color settings and automation features that work together with other smart home devices (like security cameras and motion sensors).
- Current Strategy
 - Smart Outdoor Lighting Ecosystem: Philips Hue Outdoors focusses on offering a wide range of outdoor smart lighting products. These products are fully combined with their broader indoor smart lighting ecosystem, allowing users to control them via apps or voice assistants.
 - Emphasis on Smart Home Integration: The strategy emphasizes seamless integration with major smart home systems like Alexa and Google Home. This ensures that their outdoor lights can be controlled through the same platform as other smart home devices.
 - Expansion into Outdoor Spaces: Philips Hue is expanding its outdoor product offerings to cover both functional and decorative outdoor lighting, from security lighting to ambiance lighting.
 - Focus on Energy Efficiency: Their outdoor lights are designed to be energy-efficient. They make use of LED technology that lasts longer and uses less power, this aligns with consumer trends for sustainable products.
- Assumptions
 - Continued Growth in Smart Home Adoption: Philips Hue Outdoors assumes that smart home technologies will continue to grow and that consumers will more and more want their outdoor lighting to be connected and controlled in the same way as indoor lighting.
 - High Demand for Customization: They likely assume that their customers will continue to prefer customization and control in outdoor lighting. For example, for creating different moods and enhancing security through automation.
- Capabilities
 - Technological Leadership in Smart Lighting: Philips has strong technological expertise in smart lighting systems. They offer advanced features like remote control, automation and color customization. Their ability to create connected lighting solutions that combine with smart home ecosystems is a competitive advantage.

- Strong Brand Recognition: Philips Hue is a trusted name in smart lighting, which causes its brand recognition to extend to their outdoor lighting products. Their global sales network makes sure that their outdoor products reach a wide audience.
- Limited Focus Beyond Lighting: While Philips Hue dominates in smart lighting, they are not involved in other garden solutions like irrigation or pond management. This could potentially limit their appeal to consumers seeking a more integrated outdoor ecosystem like WAFE, which covers all aspects of garden management.
- Design and Aesthetic Expertise: Philips Hue is good in designing aesthetically pleasing, functional lighting. Their ability to combine form and function makes them attractive to consumers who want both utility and beauty in their outdoor environments.

D.4 Four Corners Model BEGA

- Motivations (Drivers)

- Commitment to Quality and Durability: BEGA is driven by its need to produce high-quality, long-lasting lighting solutions that meet design standards in the architectural sector. Their motivation lies in keeping their reputation for durability and high quality products.
- Expansion in High-End Outdoor Lighting: BEGA focuses on the high-end lighting market, where customers seek architectural aesthetics and high-performance lighting. Their motivation includes growing their portfolio of premium outdoor lighting solutions, providing lighting solutions for both residential clients and large commercial projects.
- Sustainability and Technological Innovation: BEGA is increasingly motivated by environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. They have been investing in LED technology and energy-saving designs, which aligns with their commitment to provide quality and helps appeal to eco-conscious consumers.

- Current Strategy

- Focus on Architectural and Landscape Lighting: BEGA's primary strategy focuses on high-end outdoor lighting for architectural and landscape situations. They design lighting products that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing, catering to customers who value design, durability and performance in lighting.
- Strong Emphasis on Durability and Weather Resistance: BEGA is known for producing lighting that can withstand extreme outdoor conditions, which is crucial for their brand. This durability differentiates them from competitors and aligns with their high-end positioning.
- Expansion into Smart Lighting for Architectural Applications: BEGA has begun integrating smart technology in its products, although their primary focus remains on architectural lighting rather than comprehensive smart home or garden ecosystems. They emphasize creating lighting systems that can be controlled for ambiance and security without necessary integration with broader smart home platforms.

- Assumptions

- Focus on Quality Over Automation: BEGA likely assumes that their target market prefers quality, design and durability over fully integrated smart functions. They believe their customers value the craftsmanship of their products and the aesthetic appeal, rather than requiring a fully connected ecosystem.

- Market Stability in High-End Lighting: BEGA likely assumes that their niche in high-quality outdoor lighting is stable. With steady demand from architectural and design-focused customers they may not anticipate strong competition from more mainstream smart lighting providers.
- Capabilities
 - Expertise in Premium Outdoor Lighting: BEGA has extensive expertise in designing and producing high-performance outdoor lighting. Their products are recognized for their durability, aesthetic design and precision engineering. This gives them an advantage in high-end architectural and landscape lighting.
 - Brand Reputation for Quality: BEGA's reputation for quality and reliability strengthens their position in the premium lighting market. Their brand has reputation in both residential and commercial architectural lighting, where customers rely on BEGA's products for long-term installations.
 - Limited Smart Integration: While BEGA has added some smart technology into its products, it does not offer extensive smart home or garden ecosystem compatibility. This focus on lighting-specific solutions could limit their appeal to consumers looking for a more fully integrated garden or smart home system like WAFE's.

D.5 Four Corners Model In-lite

- Motivations (Drivers)
 - Aesthetic Leadership: In-lite focuses on visually appealing outdoor lighting solutions that enhance the ambiance of outdoor spaces. This focus drives their product development and branding efforts.
 - Sustainability Commitment: They are motivated to reduce environmental impact, which can be seen in the fact that they emphasize energy-efficient LED lighting and durable materials.
 - Automation and Smart Solutions: IoT and app-based technologies are actively added, driven by consumer demand for convenience and automation.
 - Customer-Centric Innovation: In-lite is motivated to simplify user experiences. They have easy to install systems with intuitive controls, ensuring accessibility for both residential and commercial users.
- Assumptions
 - Rising Demand for Smart Outdoor Lighting: In-lite assumes that consumers the interest consumers have in automated outdoor lighting will continue to grow, driven by trends in home automation and outdoor living.
 - Aesthetic Quality is Key: They believe that customers find appearance as important as functionality, especially in the premium marketing segment.
 - Eco-Conscious Consumers: The company assumes that sustainability and energy efficiency are increasingly important factors in consumers' purchasing decisions.
 - DIY Market Growth: In-lite assumes that customers prefer do-it-yourself (DIY) solutions over professional installation. They see their ease of installation as a competitive advantage.

- Current Strategy
 - Focus on Premium Market: Targeting high-end consumers looking for stylish, high-quality outdoor lighting systems that offer advanced features.
 - App-Driven Control Systems: Differentiating itself by giving users convenience and personalization options in their app controlled lighting systems.
 - Sustainability-Centered Product Design: Their products are designed with energy efficiency and longevity in mind. This aligns them with eco-conscious consumer preferences.
 - Exclusive Distribution Channels: In-lite primarily sells its products through specialized retailers and channels that reach the customer directly instead of through intermediaries. This reinforces their premium positioning.
- Capabilities
 - Design Excellence: In-lite is very strong in designing modern, aesthetic outdoor lighting solutions that appeal to both functional and decorative consumer needs.
 - IoT Integration Expertise: They have nice app-controlled systems and ensure seamless automation and personalization for users.
 - Sustainability Leadership: In-lite's LED technology and focus on durable, recyclable materials shows its ability to innovate towards eco-friendly products.
 - Brand Strength in Premium Lighting: In-lite has established a solid reputation for high-quality products, appealing to a niche market of selective customers.

E. COMPLETE PESTLE ANALYSIS

PESTLE template

	External factors to consider	Factors affected within my industry	Importance to organization
Political	Government policy Political stability Tax Industry regulations Global trade agreements and or restrictions	<p>The Dutch government offers various tax incentives for green initiatives, which can encourage investments in sustainable gardening solutions. Similar policies can be found in Germany.</p> <p>The EU has strict environmental regulations regarding water usage. Companies must adhere to these regulations.</p> <p>Trade policies between EU countries are relatively stable, though post-Brexit negotiations may introduce uncertainties for cross-border trade.</p> <p>The political climate in the Netherlands (and Germany, Belgium) is generally stable.</p>	<p>Medium - requires periodic monitoring.</p> <p>High - something to keep in mind.</p> <p>Medium - continue monitoring the situation, possible changes and impacts on profit margins.</p> <p>Low - for now, keep monitoring occasionally.</p>
Economic	Exchange rates Globalization Economic growth/decline Inflation Interest rates Cost of living Labor costs Consumer spending habits	<p>The Dutch economy focusses a lot on innovation and sustainability.</p> <p>Low-interest rates in the Netherlands and Germany encourage consumer spending, while inflation can impact disposable income, influencing purchasing decisions.</p> <p>Living costs can influence investment in home gardening.</p> <p>Low unemployment rates support consumer confidence and spending.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium-High</p> <p>Medium</p>
Social	Consumer trends/tastes, Fashions Consumer buying habits Lifestyle factors Career attitudes Work-life balance Population demographics	<p>Cultural appreciation for nature and outdoor spaces drives the gardening hobby, though sleek and stone gardens make their appearance more often.</p> <p>There is a growing trend in organic gardening and self-sustainability, as consumers become more health-conscious and environmentally aware.</p> <p>The aging population in Western European countries may lead to an increased demand for easy-to-use gardening products.</p> <p>Younger consumers are driving trends toward smart technologies, including smart gardening technologies.</p> <p>Environmental awareness is high, prompting eco-friendly products.</p>	<p>High - requires regular monitoring.</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>Very-High</p>

	External factors to consider	Factors affected within my industry	Importance to organization
Technology	Automation Innovation Disruptive technologies Social networking Upgrades Robotics Artificial Intelligence Security	<p>Innovations such as smart irrigation systems, automated garden lighting, and advanced landscaping technologies are gaining traction. Companies need to keep innovating and adapting to these advancements to stay competitive.</p> <p>E-commerce has influenced how products are marketed and sold. Online platforms are increasingly popular and allow for a broader audience.</p> <p>Continuous development in sustainable materials and energy-efficient products is crucial. Companies invest in R&D to create products that meet the changing demands of environmentally conscious customers.</p>	<p>Very-High - requires strict monitoring.</p> <p>High - requires monitoring and adaptation.</p> <p>High - requires monitoring and adaptation.</p>
Legal	Employment law Common law Local labor law Health and safety regulations	<p>Compliance with labor laws, including regulations around minimum wage and employee rights, is critical for businesses.</p> <p>Stringent environmental laws that govern the production and sale of garden products to which companies must comply to avoid penalties and maintain their reputation.</p> <p>EU countries benefit from common trade regulations, though changing trade policies can impact the availability and cost of imported products.</p>	<p>Medium - periodic monitoring.</p> <p>High - keep monitoring.</p> <p>Medium - periodic monitoring.</p>
Environmental	Environmental restrictions imposed by in-country governments Sustainable resources CSR (Corporate social responsibility) Ethical sourcing Transportation Procurement Supply chain management Future pandemics	<p>The Netherlands is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, leading to increased demand for water-efficient and sustainable practices.</p> <p>There is a strong push for more sustainable practices, with consumers favoring products made from recycled products or recyclable themselves.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for well-being and inspired an increase in home-gardening. The trend of being more self-sufficient and focusing on outdoor spaces is likely to continue.</p>	<p>High - continuous monitoring</p> <p>High - continuous monitoring</p> <p>Medium</p>

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Fig. 51: [26]

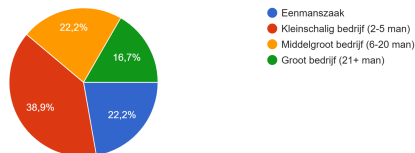
F. CUSTOMER SURVEY ANSWERS

Question 1. In which region(s) is your company active?

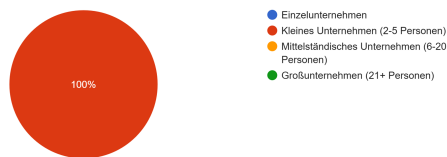


Question 2. What kind of company structure best describes your company?

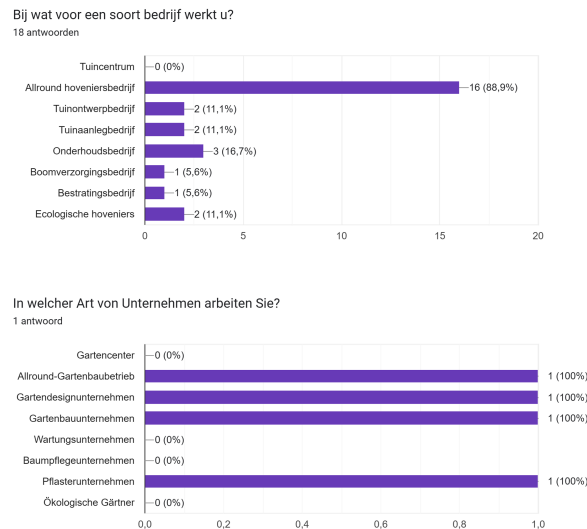
Welk soort bedrijfsstructuur omschrijft uw bedrijf?
18 antwoorden



Welche Unternehmensstruktur beschreibt Ihr Unternehmen?
1 antwort



Question 3. What kind of company do you work at?



Question 4. How often to you come into contact with smart gardens? Has this changed in the last few years?

Answers:

- Increases in every garden.
- Weekly, think of lighting and irrigation systems, especially the last one increases/gets applied more often.
- Every month, keeps emerging more.
- Not a lot yet.
- 2-3x a year.
- 4 times per year. Requests increase.
- More and more.
- Rarely.
- Not a low, mostly limited to robot lawnmowers.
- 4x, becomes more.
- Regularly.
- 2.
- More and more often, about 10-12 times a year.

Question 5. What are tasks you usually perform with respect to smart gardens?

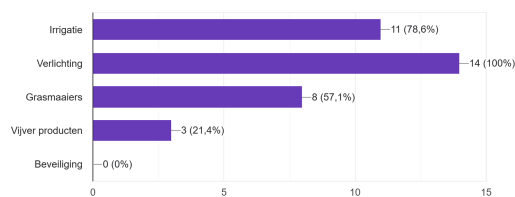
Answers:

- Irrigation, robomowers, and garden lighting.
- Directing, controlling of irrigation.
- Smart lighting or irrigation.
- Lighting or other domotica things, e.g. opening gates.
- Lighting and electricity.
- Lighting with smart app.
- Delivering, applying, and installing.
- Applying.
- Advice, installation, management.
- Lighting and watering.
- Design and application.
- Water systems.
- Delivering and installing of smart lighting, irrigation, robomower.

Question 6. With what kind of smart products and systems do you work usually?

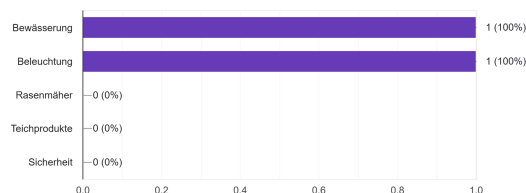
Met welke soorten slimme producten en systemen werkt u doorgaans?

14 antwoorden



Mit welchen Arten von intelligenten Produkten und Systemen arbeiten Sie normalerweise?

1 antwoord



Question 7. Which brands would you promote to your customers with respect to smart gardens?

Company	Amount
In-lite	
Kress	
Husqvarna (robomower)	
Rain Bird	
Hydrawise	
Hunter	
Stihl (mower)	
Gardena	
Light Pro	
Belrobotics	
Philips Hue	
Ovi Enschede	
Honda (mower)	
None	

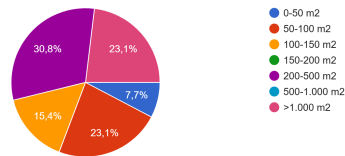
Question 8. Are you loyal to these brands or would you be willing to switch if a better brand were to enter the market? Why?

Answers:

- Yeah sure, not brand specific, service is the most important choice.
- Loyal but we are open for change if quality has been proven.
- Loyal but open to new products.
- Not loyal.
- Yes, if something works better then that is better for the customer.
- For a better product I would be willing to switch. For now loyal.
- Depends on price and quality.
- Does not apply.
- Willing to switch, if innovation is at a standstill and the other is better.
- Fine.
- Mostly loyal.
- Both.
- Yes if it is cheaper.
- Loyal because of quality.

Question 9. What is the average size of gardens you work in?

Wat is de gemiddelde grootte van de tuinen waar u in werkt?
13 antwoorden



Wie groß sind die Gärten, in denen Sie arbeiten, im Durchschnitt?
1 antwort



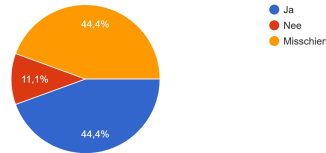
Question 10. What does the average garden look like in which you install smart systems? Could you describe it?

Answers:

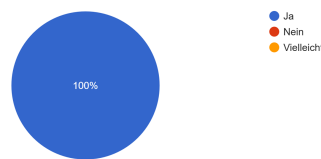
- Maximum 30 percent tiled, occupants around the 60 years old. We work a lot with fixed plant borders.
- See our website. We apply 'green,' durability is important, we try to catch water in the garden. Often roofs/verandas, sometimes with green roof. We apply lots of grass and borders with trees.
- See site.
- In general a lot of green and real grass. Natural products.
- From average city gardens to companies. Light gardens with tiles and a bit of green (80/20). Sometimes garden roofs or pergola. At company terrains irrigation.
- Roof gardens and terraces are my main practices.
- Gardens I design and apply are mainly green with enough space for terrace and paths.
- 60 percent green, 30 percent tiles, 10 percent roof. Lots of grass, single trees, more and more locations where wild grasses are allowed.
- Lots of green, customers between 40-50 years old. More and more green and garden roofs.
- 70-30 green and wood.
- Ecological and practical.
- Depends on the wishes of the customer.
- The younger the customer, the smarter the garden. Senior citizens don't have interest.

Question 11. If a smart, automated ecosystem would appear on the market that integrates irrigation, water management (think of ponds and fountains), and lighting, would this appeal to you?

Als er een slim geautomatiseerd ecosysteem op de markt zou komen dat irrigatie, watermanagement (denk bijvoorbeeld aan vijvers en ...), en licht combineert, zou dit u dan aanspreken?
18 antwoorden



Wenn ein intelligentes automatisiertes Ökosystem auf den Markt käme, das Bewässerung, Wassermanagement (denken Sie an Teiche und Sprinklerbeleuchtung kombiniert, würde Sie das ansprechen?
1 antwort



Question 12. Could you explain your answer on the previous question?

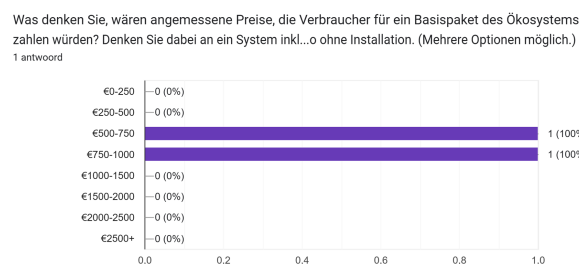
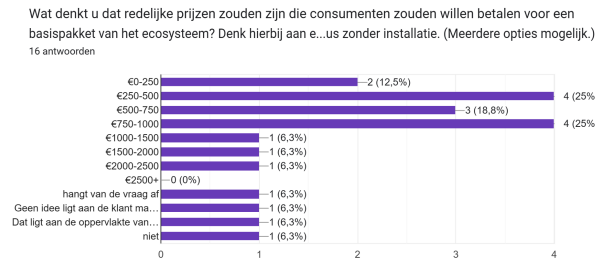
- However, we don't apply a lot of ponds.
- We don't do a lot with ponds so it does not happen often.
- No.
- Now you work with different apps that don't work together well. All in one would be best.
- Only if it fits between the borders of garden design.
- Only if it crosses my path.
- Always interested in innovations.
- Would need to be applicable in a standard city garden. Systems should not disturb each other with defects.
- I want to see it first.
- We do tree care, management for trees with climbing techniques. Give as little as possible lighting pollution and unnatural things in gardens/lands/forests.
- Often you need separate modules and/or software to control systems. If this could be integrated it would save a lot of work. Further, it would seem handy if you could divide it by choice. For example, only watermanagement and lighting.
- Now always different apps to manage everything, everyone in their own way, all in one would be better.
- Some of the customers want to go that way.

- Depends on user friendliness, the design, and how extensive the system is.
- Good way to reuse rainwater. And to produce a circular system.
- A lot has appeared and disappeared, we won't switch so easily.

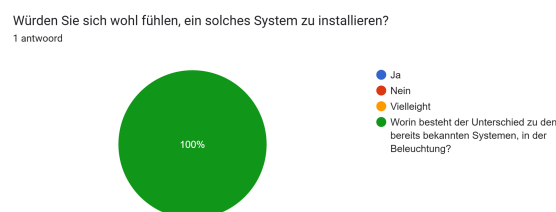
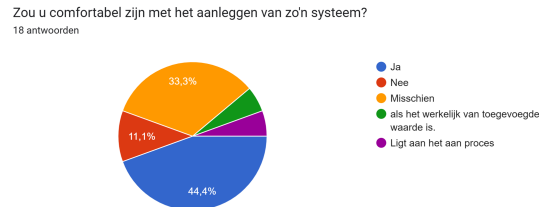
Question 13. Which qualities and functionalities would you find important in such a system?

- Clear and simple use.
- Functionality, it is important that it works, that the pond clear is (if that is the customers wish).
- Privacy.
- Easy use/installation. Readable from a distance for the gardener. Nice margins.
- Easy use and relevant with regards to watering without unnecessary lighting elements. As little plastic as possible.
- It should not be malfunction sensitive.
- Ease of use.
- Easy to control for the customer (preferably through app). Uncluttered/uncomplicated/clear installation for us. Preferred with 12V systems.
- Simple.
- Climate neutral and biological, nature following.
- User friendly, overview.
- Simple.
- Use as much rainwater as possible. No drinkwater.
- Ease of controlling, lots of systems are too complicated for older uses.

Question 14. What do you think would be a reasonable price for consumers to buy a basic set of the ecosystem? Think of a system including application, pole/central hub, electricity network and irrigation network. This is without products to connect to the system like sprinklers, lamps, pumps, etc. This is also without installation, just the system itself. (More options possible.)



Question 15. Would you be comfortable installing such a system?



Question 16. Would you be willing to learn to apply such a system?

Answers:

- Yes x9.
- No x1.
- If the price/quality ratio is right.
- If there is enough support among customers.
- If it brings enough advantages for the customer compared to current systems, then yes.

G. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

G.1 AI Usage

Prompt

The questions and information entered into Chat-GPT to get to the Actionable Insights in Appendix F.2:

Make the following table with recommendations that state the recommendation, a small note as to why, and from which analysis it originates. combine similar (or the same and differently worded) recommendations With the performed analyses, methods and frameworks combined, strategic recommendations regarding Wafe's positioning, market penetration and actions can be synthesized. In the table below these recommendations have been highlighted and described, together with a small note as to where this recommendation comes from. SWOT • To develop a hybrid product portfolio, meaning to combine premium-quality products with more affordable, streamlines options to capture different customer segments. • To enhance smart, Eco-friendly technologies and invest in sustainable, energy-efficient, and IoT-integrated products. All while ensuring user-friendly interfaces and high data security. • To expand into emerging markets and broader retail channels. Leverage underserved regions and non-specialized retail distribution to grow brand awareness and accessibility. • To continuously research and develop, while regularly updating and innovating products to align with both regulatory standards and evolving technology trends. This would ensure long-term market relevance. • To leverage existing trends and align the brand with the sustainability trend, emphasizing energy-efficiency and water-saving features across its offerings. Potentially partnering with Eco-focused organizations could also help increase the credibility and attract even more environmentally conscious consumers. Five Forces: • Wafe would be well positioned to protect its market share from new entrants as significant entry barriers can be built by securing distribution channels and simply offering their unique and comprehensive ecosystem. • By proactively managing supplier relationships and investing in in-house production and capabilities, Wafe could maintain control over costs and ensure steady supply of components and products, minimizing supplier power as a risk factor. • By offering a customizable and feature rich ecosystem, Wafe can attract customers willing to pay more premium prices, reducing risk from buyer power and positioning the brand as a premium choice in the market. • By emphasizing the unique, eco-friendly, and time saving aspects of the integrated ecosystem, Wafe could differentiate itself from competitors. This would reduce risk from traditional and niche substitutes. • As Wafe will offer an entirely new integrated solution to gardening it is initially unique and will have limited direct competition. This ensures that Wafe will have a brief period to secure a market share and build brand loyalty before competitors decide to expand into this new market as well. Rapid establishment and aggressive initial market penetration could provide a safeguard against future competitive forces. • Once established Wafe should keep innovating and keep a steady flow of updates within their system and products to keep customers engaged and making it harder for competitors to catch up. A roadmap for future product upgrades and additional features could be developed and implemented. Four corners: • A new company entering the overarching market of garden management should expect competition based on specialized expertise and quality. By combining the different areas into a cohesive system, a unique edge over specialized competitors might be created, though an equally high-quality standard across all areas would be advised to compete. • Consumers nowadays are expecting smart and eco-conscious solutions, by offering the fully integrated, smart-enabled, and sustainable Wafe ecosystem, with emphasis on water and energy conservation, Wafe could resonate with this consumer trend and target audience. • Brand recognition and consumer trust built up by competitors are significant hurdles for Wafe. As a new entrant it might be of importance to establish credibility quickly, possibly by demonstrating the seamless integration

of different garden management areas, reliability, and ease of use to consumers. • With ecosystems becoming increasingly common, a holistic ecosystem could meet an unfulfilled need. Careful product expansion and specialized functionality and constructive interaction across all areas will be important. • Robust technical expertise in water management, lighting, and irrigation will be necessary to match or exceed existing technology and quality benchmarks. PESTLE • Invest in designing products that are water-efficient, sustainable, and made from recyclable or recycled materials. This aligns with EU environmental regulations and appeals to eco-conscious consumers. • Obtain recognized eco-certifications to bolster credibility and attract environmentally aware customers and help meet regulatory demands. • Develop or partner to offer technology driven products such as smart irrigation, automated lighting, and energy-efficient equipment to cater to the younger, technology driven demographic. • Continually invest in research and development to keep up with rapidly advancing gardening technologies and innovations. • Strengthen online presence and e-commerce capabilities to expand reach and simplify customer purchasing, as e-commerce grows in popularity. • Design ergonomic and easy to use products for older adults who enjoy gardening but may have physical limitations. Use marketing that highlights ease of use and accessibility. • Emphasize organic, self-sufficiency, and low-impact lifestyle benefits in marketing efforts. Promoting the mental and physical health benefits of gardening to resonate with the post-pandemic trend of being sustainable and health conscious. • Consider a pricing structure that balances quality with affordability, especially if inflation or cost of living continues to impact disposable income. • Secure sustainable and local suppliers when possible to mitigate supply chain disruptions. • Keep an eye on interest rates, inflation, and consumer spending habits to adjust strategies as needed, ensuring resilience in changing economic conditions. • Proactively adopt best practices in water management, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing to comply with EU and national regulations and reduce risk of penalties. • Integrate Corporate Social Responsibility efforts by contributing to community gardening projects or environmental programs. This can enhance brand reputation and align with the values of socially aware consumers. • Keep abreast of EU and national policies, particularly around trade regulations and environmental standards, to anticipate impacts on cross-border operations. • Diversify product offerings and explore new market segments, especially within the stable EU market, to spread risk and capture different consumer groups.

After the initial response(s) were not up to standard:

you can do better; there is more overlap if you deconstruct some of the points i gave you

is there no information missing, no points at all that would still need to be added based on the initial points?.

Result

By letting the engine rethink and revisit all information provided, it then delivered a satisfiable and usable result. This was used as a basis to deliver the final Actionable Insights table, with a few adjustments. The answer from Chat-GPT was:

Recommendation	Note	Origin
Develop a tiered product portfolio to serve premium and cost-sensitive segments	A balanced portfolio can capture a wider customer base, attracting both high-end and budget-conscious consumers. This strategy supports brand positioning as adaptable and inclusive of diverse purchasing powers.	SWOT, PESTLE
Focus on eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and IoT-integrated technology across all products	By enhancing eco-friendly and smart technologies, Wafe aligns with consumer demand, regulatory standards, and future-proofs against sustainability trends. This approach reinforces brand loyalty and differentiation.	SWOT, PESTLE, Four Corners
Expand distribution channels to emerging markets and accessible retail outlets	Expanding to underserved regions and broadening retail presence boosts brand visibility and market penetration, crucial for rapid growth and market share capture.	SWOT, Five Forces
Build strong supplier relationships and invest in in-house capabilities	Reducing reliance on external suppliers and building in-house production capabilities helps Wafe manage costs, reduce supply chain risks, and maintain steady product flow.	Five Forces, PESTLE
Develop a customizable, integrated ecosystem with continuous innovation to attract premium buyers	Offering a feature-rich ecosystem appeals to premium buyers willing to pay for customization, reducing buyer power risks, and establishing Wafe as a quality-focused brand. Regular product upgrades will keep customers engaged.	Five Forces, SWOT, Four Corners
Establish Wafe as an early and differentiated brand in the integrated garden management market	Aggressive initial market penetration combined with a cohesive and unique ecosystem positions Wafe as a pioneer, creating a temporary competitive advantage before others enter the market.	Five Forces, Four Corners
Demonstrate reliability, ease of use, and quality to quickly establish brand credibility	New market entrants need strong brand trust; Wafe can overcome this by emphasizing seamless integration, high-quality components, and intuitive designs across all products.	Four Corners, PESTLE
Prioritize technical expertise in water management, lighting, and irrigation for a high-quality standard	Expertise in core areas like water and lighting ensures Wafe meets industry benchmarks, creating a competitive advantage in the specialized garden management market.	Four Corners
Offer products designed for ergonomic use and accessibility	Designing for ease of use benefits older adults and those with physical limitations, broadening market appeal and aligning with inclusivity trends.	PESTLE
Highlight eco-certifications, sustainability, and health benefits in marketing efforts	Obtaining eco-certifications enhances credibility, while promoting mental and physical health benefits of gardening resonates with post-pandemic consumer priorities. Partnering with eco-focused organizations can also boost brand authenticity.	PESTLE, SWOT
Strengthen e-commerce and digital presence to reach broader customer segments	Expanding e-commerce capabilities allows Wafe to tap into the growing trend of online shopping, simplifying purchasing for consumers and extending reach.	PESTLE
Adapt strategies to economic changes and maintain affordable options	Flexibility in pricing and securing sustainable suppliers provides resilience against inflation and market volatility, making Wafe adaptable to fluctuating consumer spending habits.	PESTLE, Five Forces
Integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, including partnerships with community gardening and environmental programs	Participating in socially responsible projects builds brand reputation and aligns Wafe with values important to eco-conscious consumers.	PESTLE
Proactively comply with regulatory standards and anticipate policy changes	Staying updated on EU regulations and environmental standards helps avoid compliance issues and demonstrates Wafe's commitment to sustainability and responsible practices.	PESTLE
Establish a roadmap for frequent updates and new features	A structured plan for updates maintains customer engagement and loyalty, making it difficult for competitors to catch up. Regular innovation demonstrates Wafe's commitment to quality and responsiveness to trends.	Five Forces
Appeal to lifestyle trends by highlighting sustainability, health, and self-sufficiency benefits in marketing	Messaging focused on self-sufficiency, wellness, and low environmental impact appeals to consumers' post-pandemic values, helping Wafe resonate with target audiences.	PESTLE

G.2 Final Actionable Insights Table

Recommendation	Notes	Source
Develop a tiered/hybrid product portfolio to serve both premium and cost-sensitive segments.	A balanced portfolio can capture a wider customer base, attracting both high-end and budget-conscious customers. This strategy supports brand positioning as adaptable and inclusive, helping to spread risks, defend against inflation, and secure a larger market segment.	SWOT, PESTLE, Customer Survey
Focus on eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and IoT integrated technology across all products, while ensuring user-friendly interfaces.	By enhancing eco-friendly and smart technologies, Wafe aligns with consumer demands and regulatory standards, while also becoming future proof against increasing sustainability trends. This approach would also help reinforce brand loyalty and differentiation.	SWOT, PESTLE, Four Corners
Secure and expand distribution channels to emerging markets and accessible retail outlets.	Expanding to underserved regions and broadening retail presence boosts brand visibility and market penetration, which is crucial for rapid growth and market share capturing. Securing distribution channels will also help protect against new entrants.	SWOT, Five Forces
Build stronger supplier relationships and invest in in-house capabilities.	Reducing reliance on external suppliers and building in-house production would help Wafe manage costs, reduce supply chain risks, and maintain a steady product flow.	Five Forces, PESTLE
Develop a customizable, integrated ecosystem with continuous innovation to attract premium buyers.	Offering a feature-rich ecosystem appeals to premium buyers willing to pay for customization, reducing buyer power risks, and establishing Wafe as a quality-focused brand. Regular product upgrades will keep customers engaged.	Five Forces, SWOT, Four Corners
Establish Wafe as an early and differentiated brand in the integrated garden management market.	Aggressive initial market penetration combined with a cohesive and unique ecosystem positions Wafe as a pioneer, creating a temporary competitive advantage before others enter the market.	Five Forces, Four Corners
Demonstrate reliability, ease of use, and quality to quickly establish brand credibility.	New market entrants need strong brand trust; Wafe can overcome this by emphasizing seamless integration, high-quality components, and intuitive designs across all products.	Four Corners, PESTLE, Customer Survey
Prioritize technical expertise in water management, lighting, and irrigation for a high-quality standard.	Expertise in core areas like water and lighting ensures Wafe meets industry benchmarks, creating a competitive advantage in the specialized garden management market.	Four Corners
Offer products designed for ergonomic use and accessibility.	Designing for ease of use not only benefits older adults and people with physical limitations, but also broadens market appeal and supports inclusivity trends.	PESTLE

Highlight eco-certifications, sustainability, and health benefits in marketing efforts, and appeal to corresponding lifestyle trends.	Obtaining eco-certifications enhances credibility, while promoting mental and physical health benefits of gardening resonates with post-pandemic consumer priorities. Partnering with eco-focused organizations can also boost brand authenticity. By appealing and messaging these trends Wafe will also resonate with these target audiences.	PESTLE, SWOT
Strengthen e-commerce and digital presence to reach broader customer segments.	Expanding e-commerce capabilities allows Wafe to tap into the growing trend of online shopping, simplifying purchasing for consumers and extending reach.	PESTLE
Adapt strategies to economic changes and maintain affordable options.	Flexibility in pricing and securing sustainable suppliers provides resilience against inflation and market volatility, making Wafe adaptable to fluctuating consumer spending habits.	PESTLE, Five Forces
Integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, including partnerships with community gardening and environmental programs.	Participating in socially responsible projects builds brand reputation and aligns Wafe with values important to eco-conscious consumers.	PESTLE
Continuously focus on research and development, while establishing a roadmap for frequent updates and new features.	A structured plan for updates maintains customer engagement and loyalty, making it difficult for competitors to catch up. Regulatory innovation demonstrates Wafe's commitment to quality and responsiveness to trends, staying relevant in the market and keeping up with rapidly advancing innovations.	Five Forces, SWOT, PESTLE
Emphasize timesaving, eco-friendliness, and full automated garden integration.	By focussing on these USPs, Wafe could differentiate itself from competitors and reduce risk from traditional and niche substitutes.	Five Forces, SWOT
Introduce a modular pricing strategy with tiered options: Basic (€250–€400), Standard (€600–€750), and Premium (€900–€1200).	A flexible pricing structure accommodates both budget-conscious and premium customers. Modular design lowers the entry barrier and encourages long-term customer upgrades. This approach ensures competitiveness without compromising WAFE's high-quality positioning.	Market Positioning Maps, Customer Survey
Emphasize value over low price by highlighting high quality, ease of use, and installer-friendliness.	While WAFE may not be the cheapest, it can stand out by offering reliability and user-friendliness. This lowers sensitivity to price comparisons and increases brand trust, especially among professionals like landscapers and gardeners.	Customer Survey, SWOT, Four Corners
Avoid positioning solely in the low-cost segment to protect perceived brand value and ensure sustainable margins.	Pricing too low could harm WAFE's brand perception and leave room for competitors to dominate the premium space. Realistic pricing with clearly communicated value is necessary to support long-term growth and innovation.	SWOT, Five Forces

H. MANAGEABLE ACTIONS

Develop a tiered/hybrid product portfolio to serve both premium and cost-sensitive segments.

- Determine two (or three) price ranges, ranging from cost-sensitive to premium.
 - Determine two price caps, one aimed at cost-sensitive customers and one aimed at premium customers.
 - Conduct brainstorming sessions to discuss product specifications for each of the cost segments (for example, IoT for the premium products).
 - Conduct user surveys to validate ideas and refine features based on their needs and feedback.
 - Prototype each product from both segments and test them in-house.

Focus on eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and IoT integrated technology across all products, while ensuring user-friendly interfaces.

- Choose only durable and environmentally friendly materials for all products.
- Calculate/test how much energy and water can be saved when using Wafe's system and products when compared to traditional methods (hand watering, normal garden lights etc.). Gardena does this as well, claiming that their Micro-Drip-System can save up to 70
 - Focus on the eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and water-efficient aspects in the branding and marketing of the products.
 - Publish the calculated efficiency numbers on the website under each product or under a special tab. This would create more credibility than how Gardena handles their numbers, as they only state it without giving substantial evidence of their claims.
- Invest, research, and implement Internet of Things into the portfolio, especially within the more premium products (for example, weather data to automatically adjust the amount of irrigation).
- Make sure all interfaces and products are user-friendly.
 - Take inspiration from how Philips Hue has a very user-friendly interface on their application.
 - Implement user feedback to improve on the user-friendliness of products. Initially after prototype testing, but also when updating and improving products after a few years.

Secure and expand distribution channels to emerging markets and accessible retail outlets.

- Make personal connections with retail outlets and gardeners.
- Offer favorable deals to ensure good relationships.
- Ensure multiple kinds of distribution channels (through gardeners, retail, website etc.) to ensure broad market reach and presence.

Build stronger supplier relationships and invest in in-house capabilities.

- Consider producing critical parts to products yourselves.
- Ensure strong relationships with suppliers to ensure loyalty in price, quality, and service.

Develop a customizable, integrated ecosystem with continuous innovation to attract premium buyers.

- Ensure the system is customizable by making it out of separate parts that can be integrated to suit the customer's needs and preferences.
- Keep adding new innovations to the system.
- Keep continuously improving on the existing products.
 - Make a roadmap to ensure yearly improvements are made.

Establish Wafe as an early and differentiated brand in the integrated garden management market.

- In branding and marketing, highlight that Wafe will be the very first integrated garden management system, as well as all the advantages the system will bring compared to existing solutions.
- Ensure Wafe has a strong and solid foundation before entering the market.
- Have a solid marketing entry plan to ensure swift market entry.
- Apply aggressive market penetration techniques.
 - Establish distribution channels.
 - Create entry barriers for potential competition.
 - Advertise and market the system aggressively.
 - Keep innovating on existing products, improving them regularly.
 - Keep innovating and designing new products.
 - Use current trends to market WAFE.
 - A hybrid portfolio with dynamic pricing.
 - Search for beneficial partnerships and collaborations.

Demonstrate reliability, ease of use, and quality to quickly establish brand credibility.

- Have the products exist from durable and trustworthy materials.
- Make sure the products are reliable and not faulty.
- Make sure all products and systems can withstand wear and tear for multiple years (for example, look at the reliability of BEGA's products, which are durable enough to be implemented into architecture).
- Make sure the products are easy and intuitive to use.
 - Perform testing to ensure.

Prioritize technical expertise in water management, lighting, and irrigation for a high-quality standard.

- Make sure there are people within the company with enough technical expertise and knowledge in the water management, lighting, and irrigation fields to ensure industry benchmarks are met and a competitive advantage over potential competitors is achieved.

- Have employees who specialize in each of these fields.

Offer products designed for ergonomic use and accessibility.

- Design products keeping in mind possible elderly or limited users (as an automated gardening system might also be beneficial to these kinds of consumers).
- Test all products with regards to ergonomics and accessibility.
 - Perform user testing.
 - * Perform user testing in-house.
 - * Perform user testing within the market demographics.
 - * Perform user testing with elderly and users with physical/mental limitations.

Highlight eco-certifications, sustainability, and health benefits in marketing efforts, and appeal to corresponding lifestyle trends.

- Obtain eco-certifications for the system and possible products.
 - Research possible eco-certifications and their requirements.
 - Design products to suit these requirements.
 - Apply for the most credible eco-certifications.
- Present the physical and mental health benefits of gardening, combined with the benefits of the new system and potential products, in marketing efforts.
- Use suitable and current lifestyle trends to market Wafe.
 - Green garden trend and decorative plant trend that cause consumers to grow greener gardens again.
 - Self-sustainability and home gardening trend (post covid trend) which has people grow their own, healthy produce.
 - Environmental activity and sustainability conscious trends, preferring durable, energy efficient, and water saving products.
 - Water buffering trend which causes more people to consider ponds again.
- Use the benefits of home gardening in marketing, now made easier and more accessible by the Wafe system.
- Stay on top of eco-lifestyle trends and adjust marketing appropriately.
 - Do the trends change, or a new suitable trend emerge, change marketing accordingly, but within the same political stance (eco-friendly, sustainable, good for nature and health etc.)

Strengthen e-commerce and digital presence to reach broader customer segments.

- Make an online platform to offer products and services to customers, as online shopping is a growing trend.

Adapt strategies to economic changes and maintain affordable options.

- Present products in different price ranges (hybrid portfolio).
- Ensure flexibility in price fluctuation to ensure resilience against inflation and market volatility.
 - Arrange prices in such a way that a small price drop would still be acceptable should the market or economy require it.

Integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, including partnerships with community gardening and environmental programs.

- Ensure diversity, equality and inclusivity are implemented and respected within the company structure.
- Allocate a certain amount of winnings or special actions to a good cause that suits Wafe's vision.
- Look into the possibility of collaboration with community gardens.
 - Allow people to witness the system in a communal setting and increase awareness of the system.
- Have close contact with environmental programs and assist them where possible.
 - Dedicate a page on the website where people can read about the good causes supported, community gardens collaborated with, and environmental programs assisted (how Gardena has done this can be taken as an example, though on the Wafe website it could be placed in a bit more visible and organized way).

Continuously research and develop and establish a roadmap for frequent updates and new features.

- Keep expanding and building on the system.
 - Determine what products should be added to the system over time.
 - Determine which products should be implemented in what order.
- Update and improve on existing products and the system once every few years.
 - Determine beforehand when which product could benefit from improvement.
 - Stay flexible so that impromptu improvements can be made to a product, were it to be required based on reviews and potential faults within the product.
- Make a roadmap with all the steps to be taken for the next x years and which improvements, updates, new features, and new products should be made within this timeframe.

Emphasize timesaving, eco-friendliness, and full automated garden integration.

- Utilize the USPs of the system and emphasize them in marketing.
 - Calculate the amount of time, water and energy that can be saved by integrating the system when compared to traditional practices.
 - * Use this data in marketing, as proof of how sustainable the system is.

- Emphasize that this will be the only automated garden system that integrates water management, irrigation, and lighting. Therefore, being more useful than competitors that deal in separate systems.
- Unlike many competitors, this system will not require a stable Wi-Fi connection to function.
- How compatible and expandable the system is and how easy it will be to expand it and add more products to it over time (for example, how people could build up the system in their own garden over time and not necessarily need to buy and implement the entire system in one purchase).

Ensure rapid establishment and aggressive initial market penetration.

- Make sure Wafe has established some sort of market presence before competitors catch up and expand their systems as well.
 - Establish credibility quickly.
 - * Get eco-certifications.
 - * Ensure good quality.
 - * Deal with negative reviews and online criticism appropriately and professionally.
 - Build brand loyalty quickly.
 - * Listen to customer complaints and concerns.

Introduce a modular pricing strategy with tiered options: Basic (€250–€400), Standard (€600–€750), and Premium (€900–€1200).

- Define features and specifications per pricing tier.
 - Conduct internal product mapping to decide which functionalities and components would fit within each tier.
 - Ensure upward compatibility, users should be able to upgrade from Basic to Premium easily (modular upgrades).
- Create clear visual and textual comparisons between tiers for on the website and in marketing.
- Offer optional add-ons or bundles to customize the systems within each tier.
 - Develop "starter packs" and "expansion packs" to simplify the customer journey.

Emphasize value over low price by highlighting high quality, ease of use, and installer-friendliness.

- Focus messaging around long-term benefits: durability, water/energy savings, ease of installation and use, etc.
 - Highlight product longevity and reduced maintenance requirements.
 - Use user testimonials and case studies to show real-life value.
- Collaborate with Toveniers to position the product as the "installer's favorite."
 - Provide training and installation guides for the Toveniers.
 - Include QR codes or simple manuals in the product packaging for ease of setup.

- Ensure branding, packaging, and communication are premium in appearance and tone, even for Basic price tier products.
- Include value breakdowns in marketing (for example, "saves X liters of water per year," and "pays itself back in Y months by saving Z kWh compared to manual lights.")

Avoid positioning solely in the low-cost segment to protect perceived brand value and ensure sustainable margins.

- Ensure even the Basic product lines feel high quality in touch and aesthetics.
- Emphasize the system's modularity and upgrade path, reinforcing long-term investment rather than one-off cheap purchases.
- Use sales and feedback data to review each tier's performance and optimize positioning accordingly.

I. BRANDING STRATEGY BASED ON THEORIES

Step	Theory / Model	Theoretical Implication for WAFE
<i>1. Define Brand Identity</i>	Kapferer – Brand Identity Prism	Identity coherence across facets builds authenticity and alignment.
	Merlo et al. – Brand Archetypes	Archetypes offer cognitive shortcuts, enhancing brand recognition.
<i>2. Shape Personality & Relationships</i>	Aaker – Brand Personality Dimensions	Emotional traits humanize WAFE and drive attachment.
	Fournier – Brand Relationship Theory	Brand as a relationship partner fosters loyalty through emotional commitment.
<i>3. Build Mental Availability</i>	Keller – CBBE (Salience)	High salience ensures WAFE enters the consumer’s mind at the decision moment.
<i>4. Communicate Value</i>	Keller – CBBE (Performance & Imagery)	Linking function with symbolic imagery deepens perceived value.
	Erdem & Swait – Brand as Risk Signal	Consistency reduces uncertainty, positioning the brand as trustworthy.
<i>5. Create Brand Experience</i>	Osterle et al. – Brand Worlds	Immersive brand ecosystems heighten engagement and symbolic identification.
	Mäläskä et al. – Co-creation	Shared brand creation enhances authenticity and stakeholder investment.
<i>6. Align Culture & Values</i>	Schmidt et al. – Activist Brands	Value signaling differentiates and aligns WAFE with sociopolitical meaning systems.
	Kapferer – Culture Alignment	Cultural congruence between internal and external brand ensures long-term authenticity.
<i>7. Nurture Relationships</i>	Fournier – Brand Relationship Theory	Ongoing interactions sustain emotional bonds and deepen equity.
	Mäläskä et al. – Network Participation	Stakeholder participation distributes brand meaning across ecosystems.
<i>8. Evaluate & Adapt</i>	Keller & Kotler – Brand Equity Management	Strategic adaptation based on equity management sustains relevance.
	Kapferer – Consistency Monitoring	Ensures cultural integrity and guards against symbolic drift.

J. ENTITY STRUCTURES FOR WAFE

Entity Model	Description	Relevance for WAFE	Why (Not) Suitable/ Role in Growth	Outcome/ Role
<i>System</i>	A named infrastructure layer that connects products and services	WAFE will start out with creating a system	Supports openness, modularity, and compatibility. But as a model alone it is insufficient to carry branding or service delivery.	Potential starting point/ foundation for growth
<i>Product Service System</i>	Integrated combination of products, software, and service	Matches WAFE's customer facing model and intention of using Toveniers	Directly reflects how users will interact with WAFE through guided service and system use	Core part of WAFE's identity
<i>Umbrella Brand</i>	Single master brand under which different product and service lines operate	Needed for brand cohesion as scope expands	Supports future product family expansion, simplifies communication, and builds equity	Strategic brand architecture to facilitate WAFE's intentions to produce its own products
<i>Technology Brand</i>	Brand focuses on the underlying technology or protocol	Appealing for B2B expansion	Contradicts WAFE's consumer-facing focus on experience, though it does offer a possible future angle for licensing	Not WAFE's intention, when the system stands, the focus will shift to consumer articles
<i>Licensing Platform</i>	Business model where others pay to use WAFE's technology/ IP	Supports scalable business growth	Only feasible after IP and usage rights are secured	Would be nice if IP becomes licensable in the future
<i>Certification Platform</i>	Testing platform that WAFE certifies compatible third-party products (e.g. "WAFE Certified")	Supports brand control and trust in ecosystem	Relies on governance and standardization. High relevance once the ecosystem grows.	Would be needed for the intention of connecting third-party products without connectors
<i>Compatibility Standard</i>	Public-facing "Works with WAFE" indicator on other products	Builds user trust and partner visibility	Depends on certification infrastructure, though overlap with Matter raises questions of distinct value	Possible if it is made clear this is about the hardware, and not software that connects the products to differentiate from Matter
<i>Interoperability Standard</i>	A technical standard to ensure different brands work together	Embedded via the Matter protocol	WAFE won't be such a standard itself, as it uses Matter. It is however vital to the system's function and openness	Could be integrated/ combined through a different strategy as it does describe WAFE's system, but WAFE is not an interoperability standard itself
<i>Open Technology Standard</i>	WAFE technology becomes open-source or freely copyable	Could stimulate adoption and scale	Difficult to maintain brand control and monetization. Only viable at a very mature ecosystem level.	Not strategic focus
<i>Ecosystem Brand</i>	A unified environment that provides everything as a one-stop service, and enables others to integrate	Matches long-term vision of owning full user experience and platform	Requires mature brand, governance, in-house app, and development tools	Would enable platform positioning, could be a long-term growth opportunity

Table 6: WAFE as entity, part 1

Entity Model	Description	Relevance for WAFE	Why (Not) Suitable/ Role in Growth	Outcome/ Role
<i>Lifestyle Brand</i>	Expresses values, aesthetics, and identity beyond utility (e.g. community, emotional connection)	Aligned with emotional branding efforts	Only makes sense after core service and identity are firmly established	Could be possible to slowly grow into long-term after emotional brand development
<i>Franchise Model</i>	Replication of full service offering by licensed operators	Matches Tovenier-driven, service-first structure	Only viable if service quality can be standardized and branded. Requires operational maturity.	Potential future growth path
<i>Vertical Integration</i>	Control over the entire value chain (design, manufacturing, service)	Could strengthen quality and brand coherence	Requires high investment and won't be feasible in early stages	Option for long-term strategic development
<i>House of Brands</i>	Separate brands per product line or use case	Allows segmentation	Adds complexity and fragments recognition. It contradicts the unified experience WAFE wants to offer.	Not suitable
<i>Standalone Product Company</i>	Focuses on individual product sales	Feasible for launch	Does not reflect WAFE's systemic value and undermines scalability and depth.	Excludes WAFE's system and service intentions
<i>Infrastructure Layer (Invisible)</i>	WAFE operates as a backend system with no consumer-facing brand	Scalable in theory	Contradicts branding goals. Removes customer relationship and brand equity building.	Does not fit the strategic branding intentions

Table 7: WAFE as entity, part 2

K. ROAD MAP REQUIREMENTS

Phase	Stage Description	What Needs to Exist to Progress
1. Interoperable System	Powerline infrastructure with central hub/pole, using Matter for communication.	1. Functional prototype. 2. Stable Matter integration. 3. Viable connector for third party products. 4. Initial branding.
2. Product Service System	Integration of product, app, and Toveniers as service layer.	1. Find and educate Toveniers. 2. Clear customer journey. 3. Service protocols. 4. WAFE-specified UI.
3. Umbrella Brand	One consistent identity across multiple product lines.	1. Brand architecture defined. 2. Visual identity system. 3. Tone-of-voice. 4. Roadmap for future categories.
1-3. IP/ Licensing Track	Identify licensable or certifiable components of WAFE's system and/or products. Focus on securing ownership and creating legal/technical documentation	1. Recognition of proprietary elements. 2. Technical and visual documentation. 3. Visual identity formalized. 4. IP protections filed (e.g. trademarks, design rights). 5. Legal framework drafted.
4a. Certification System	"WAFE certified" label for trusted integrations.	1. Governance model. 2. Compliance testing infrastructure. 3. Brand guidelines and enforcement structure.
4b. Compatibility Label	Public-facing mark for third-party product compatibility.	1. Strategic brand positioning above Matter. 2. UX criteria for integration. 3. Enforcement agreement with partners.
4c. Licensing Model	Business model in which third parties can license WAFE technology, service structure, or brand elements.	1. Full ownership/IP secured. 2. Support structure for licenses (e.g. onboarding, documentation). 3. Licensing agreements and commercial model defined. 4. Governance in place.
5a. Franchise Model	Local partners deliver full WAFE experience.	1. Codified service protocols. 2. Training programs. 3. Strict branding controls. 4. High service maturity.
5b. Ecosystem Brand	WAFE controls full system + third party integration.	1. Developer APIs. 2. Platform tools. 3. Long-term partner support strategy. 4. Customer loyalty structure.
5c. Lifestyle Brand	WAFE expresses values and culture beyond function.	1. Emotional branding foundation. 2. Archetype development. 3. Ambassador/ community model. 4. Consistent tone and symbolism.
5d. Vertical Integration	Control over supply chain for full-stack quality.	1. Capital investment. 2. Research and Development team. 3. Justified by quality, availability, or sustainability control.

L. CHAPTER 5 STRUCTURE EXPLAINED

Grouped section in Chapter 5	Original step(s) from Chapter 3	Theories included	Justification for grouping	How the theories are applied
5.1 From Research to Strategy	- (Not in Chapter 3)	Osterwalder – Value Proposition Canvas	Serves as the bridge between the market insights and branding. Ensures all brand decisions are rooted in real user needs and market gaps.	Jobs, pains, and gains were mapped to inform product direction and brand purpose. The brand strategy is grounded in user relevance.
5.2 Identity, Archetype & Values	Step 1: Define and Align Brand Identity	Kapferer – Brand Identity Prism Merlo et al. – Brand Archetypes Mäläskä et al. – Network Participation	These elements collectively define what WAFE is at its core. Grouping them reflects the intertwined process of building a brand's foundational identity. To ensure credibility in this step, co-creation has also been applied.	By identifying identity facets and brand archetype selection through co-creation.
	Step 6: Sociopolitical Values & Internal Culture	Schmidt et al. – Sociopolitical Activist Brands Kapferer – Brand Culture Alignment	Values naturally stem from identity and are infused into both external messaging and internal behavior.	Core values are clearly defined and traced back to insights from previous research.
5.3 Personality, Voice & Relationships	Step 2: Shape Brand Personality and Emotional Appeal	Aaker – Brand Personality Dimensions Fournier – Brand Relationship Theory	Brand personality traits directly shape the tone of voice and consumer relationships. Therefore, they are best understood together.	Personality traits are defined for WAFE, and a persona relationship partner is created.
	Step 7: Manage and Nurture Brand Relationships	Fournier – Brand Relationship Theory Mäläskä et al. – Network Participation	Relationship theory influences tone, touchpoints, and community involvement. Through grouping this repetition of information is avoided.	Customer relationships and stakeholder engagement strategies are integrated through examples of tone, co-creation, and brand voice.
5.4 Salience, Recognition & Trust	Step 3: Build Mental Availability & Differentiation	Keller – CBBE (Stage 1: Salience)	Visual identity builds recognition and differentiation, which drive mental availability.	Salience through logo consistency, touchpoints, and placement is directly tied to CBBE.
	Step 4: Communicate Functional & Emotional Benefits	Keller – CBBE (Performance & Imagery) Erdem & Swait – Brand as Risk Signal	Communication and salience are interconnected in building brand preference and reducing uncertainty.	Functional benefits and emotional reassurance are communicated visually and verbally, reducing buyer risk.
5.5 Immersive Brand World & Experience	Step 5: Create Immersive and Participatory Experiences	Osterle et al. – Brand Worlds Mäläskä et al. – Co-creation of Brand Meaning	Experience design, community, and brand world creation are better understood together as WAFE's symbolic environment.	Moodboard, design language, and participatory branding elements all reflect an intentional brand world which creates stakeholder meaning.
5.6 Adaptation & Monitoring	Step 8: Measure, Adapt & Reinforce	Keller & Kotler – Brand Equity Management Kapferer – Internal-External Consistency Monitoring Keller – CBBE (Judgement, Feelings, and Resonance)	Continuous tracking supports all branding layers; it is a feedback loop, not a standalone phase. The CBBE framework can be used to determine what to track.	Planning to integrate feedback mechanisms and monitoring through touchpoints and customer feedback to guide evolution and alignment.

M. BRAND MANUAL



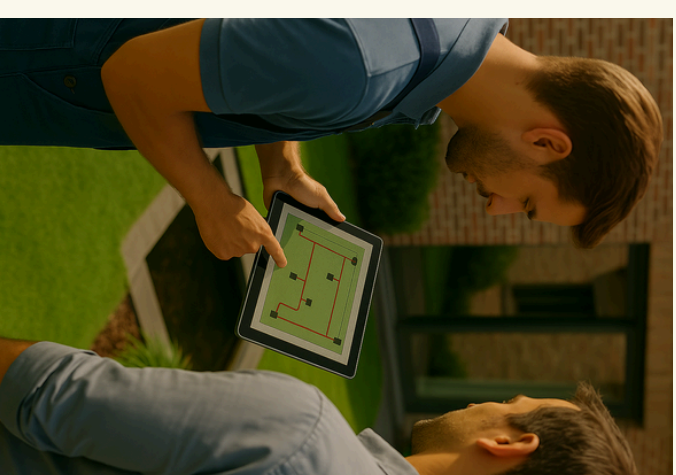
NATURE

Sustainable. Smart. Simple.

Brand Manual

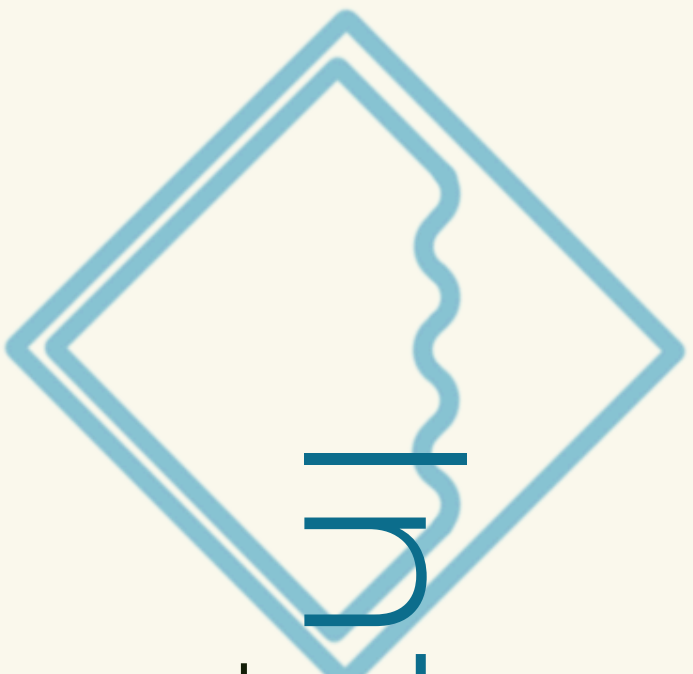
Inhoud

- 05. Introductie
- 08. Merkidentiteit
- 15. Visueel
- 25. Management



Voor werknemers en partners van WAFE.

Om te zorgen dat we WAFE uitstralen, in alles wat we doen.



Introductie



WAFE is opgericht in 2025 door een aantal enthousiaste ondernemers met ervaring in het gebied van verlichting en watermanagement, met als doel om een naadloze en geautomatiseerde tuinervaring te bieden aan klanten. Dit merchandboek is ontworpen om iedereen die met of voor WAFE werkt te helpen een consistente manier van communicatie en presentatie aan te houden, zodat we overal met één herkenbare stem spreken.

In dit handboek vind je richtlijnen over hoe WAFE zich presenteert; visueel, verbaal en schriftelijk; voor marketingdoeleinden, professionele relaties, interne en externe communicatie. Van onze visie en waarden tot toon van communicatie, visuele elementen en een groeiplan: dit handboek is het naslagwerk voor het opbouwen en vertegenwoordigen van het WAFE-merk.

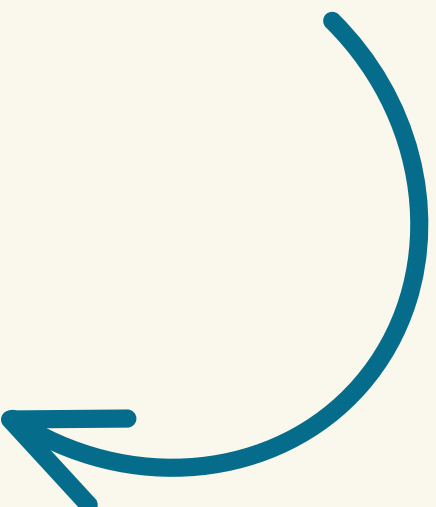
Onze Drijfveer

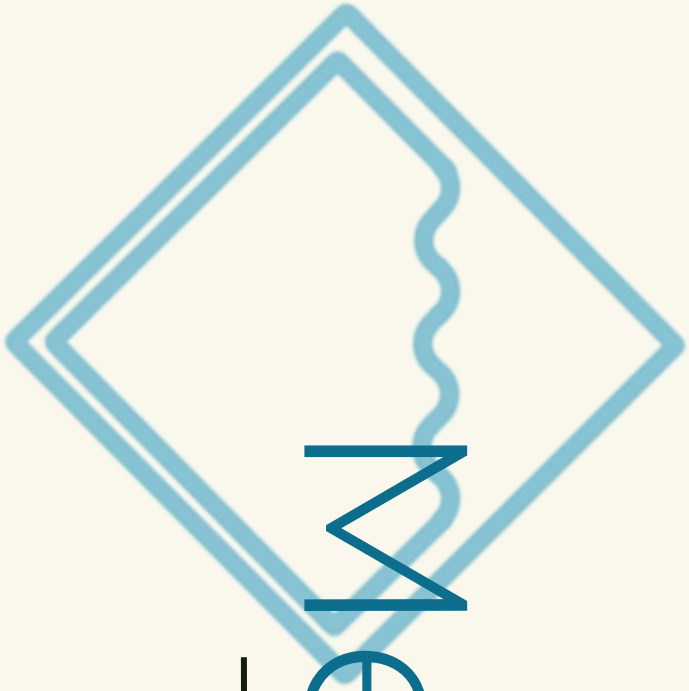
Om comfort, gemak en automatisering in de groene tuin te brengen. De eenvoud van een grijze tuin bieden, zonder concessies te doen aan duurzaamheid of esthetiek.



Onze Visie

We dromen van een wereld waarin iedereen kan genieten van een groene, levendige tuin – *zonder gedoe*. Een tuin die slim met je meedenkt, weinig vraagt, maar veel teruggeeft. Waar techniek helpt om natuur dichterbij te brengen, en gemak hand in hand gaat met duurzaamheid en schoonheid.





Merkiidentiteit

Waarden

WAFE is gebouwd op waarden die meer doen dan alleen richting geven, ze vormen het fundament van onze merk identiteit, onze keuzes, en de manier waarop we ons merk tot leven brengen.

Om dit op een heldere en toepasbare manier te structureren, wordt er in dit handboek onderscheid gemaakt tussen kernwaarden en subwaarden.

De kernwaarden zijn vaste principes waarop WAFE gebouwd is, ons DNA en strategisch kompas. Ze zijn tijdloos, diepgeworteld en geven richting aan alles wat we doen, van productontwikkeling tot communicatie en klantrelaties. Deze waarden beantwoorden de vraag: Waar staan we voor, ongeacht trends of marktdruk?

De subwaarden geven verdieping aan de kernwaarden en geven operationele richtlijnen voor product, communicatie en cultuur. Ze maken de abstracte principes concreet en vertalen ze naar gedrag, designkeuzes, klantbeleving en karakter.



Versterkende Eenvoud

Versterkende Eenvoud: Deze waarde maakt techniek vriendelijk. Minder complexiteit = meer plezier en eigenaarschap. Met minimalistische interfaces, duidelijke bediening en visuele feedback, en zonder jargon, verborgen kosten of ingewikkelde zelfstandige installatie. Rust en vertrouwen wordt uitgestraald door doordacht ontwerp.

Tuinieren wordt intuïtief, rustgevend, en zelfs leuk.

Eenvoud: Alles werkt intuïtief, zonder leercurve. Gebruikers hebben geen technische achtergrond nodig. Bijvoorbeeld toepasbaar als: simpele installatie in 3 stappen.

Duidelijkheid: Geen verborgen kosten, ingewikkelde termen of verwarrende instellingen. Alles begrijpelijk, voor jong en oud. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: heldere prijsstransparantie, begrijpelijke iconen en duidelijke UI.

Ondersteuning: Altijd hulp beschikbaar, maar nooit opdringerig. Klanten voelen zich gehoord en geholpen. Bijvoorbeeld: een live chat met een werknemer die niet alleen maar probeert te verkopen, maar écht wilt helpen.



Mensgerichte Duurzaamheid

Mensgerichte Duurzaamheid: Zichtbaar ecologische impact met duurzaamheid als een gegeven, in plaats van een optie, met duurzame keuzes ingebouwd in het systeem. Door transparante werking en een toegankelijke, vriendelijke toon is er focus op persoonlijke ondersteuning. Deze waarde verbindt ethiek met gebruiksgemak. Duurzaamheid is geen compromis, maar een vanzelfsprekend onderdeel van de ervaring.

Een systeem dat mensen én de planeet ondersteunt, moeiteloos.

Helderheid: Duurzame keuzes worden eenvoudig en transparant gemaakt; geen greenwashing, geen complexiteit. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: duidelijk zichtbare en geteste informatie over het waterbesparingspercentage bij producten.

Verbinding: De relatie tussen het bedrijf/merk en gebruikers is menselijk, ondersteunend en langdurig. Technologie is er ter versterking van de band tussen mens en natuur. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: empathische klantenservice.

Verantwoordelijkheid: Zowel in materiaalgebruik als communicatie wordt er gekozen voor ethische en duurzame opties. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: Herbruikbare verpakkingen en eerlijk materialenbeleid.



Slimme Integratie

Slimme Integratie: Deze waarde draait om slimme techniek zonder frictie en gedoe, maar wel met controle. De systemen en producten moeten naadloos bij elkaar aansluiten en modulaair ontworpen zijn om met alle behoeften mee te kunnen groeien. En alles natuurlijk met betrouwbare prestaties en hands-on ondersteuning als dat gewild is.

Technologie die past bij jouw leven, jouw tuin, jouw tempo.

Betrouwbaarheid: Alles doet wat ze moeten doen, zonder gedoe of storingen. De techniek is stabiel en doordacht, niet experimenteel. Bijvoorbeeld zichtbaar in: Een wateringsysteem dat niet faalt tijdens een hittegolf.

Flexibiliteit: Gebruikers kunnen zelf bepalen hoe eenvoudig of geavanceerd ze het systeem willen hebben. Niks is verplicht, alles is optioneel. Terug te zien in: Het modulaire design van de paal/hub, die zelf samengesteld kan worden naar de behoefte van de gebruiker en hun tuin.

Merk Persona

Bij WAFE geloven we dat een sterk merk begint bij menselijkheid. We willen geen kunstmatig imago neerzetten, maar juist een herkenbare persoonlijkheid die ons richting geeft in hoe we denken, praten, schrijven, en samenwerken.

Hiervoor is een persona ontwikkeld: **Alex**. Hij helpt ons keuzes maken in toon, stijl en gedrag. Hij is geen mascotte of acteur, hij is het kompas dat ons laat zien wie wij willen zijn als WAFE. Hij kan worden gebruikt in keuzemomenten, met de vraag: **wat zou Alex doen?**

Alex belichaamt onze waarden. Niet als een perfect voorbeeld, maar als een mens van vlees en bloed. Hij laat zien hoe WAFE voelt. Hij is degene aan wie je denkt als je een tekst schrijft, een campagne bouwt of een klant te woord staat.

"Gewoon doen wat werkt."

"Samen maken we het overzichtelijk."

"Ik ben er als je me nodig hebt."

Alex is niet alleen een persoonlijkheid, hij heeft ook een eigen stem. Hij spreekt helder, menselijk en zonder poespas. Zijn toon is vriendelijk, eerlijk, en altijd bedoeld om te helpen.

ALEX

MERK PERSOONLIJKHEID

BIOGRAFIE

Alex (38) is rustig, praktisch en prettig om mee te praten. Hij leeft ethisch en helpt anderen zonder iets terug te verwachten. Betrouwbaar, geaard en attent: Alex is de persoon die je kunt bellen als je hulp en ondersteuning nodig hebt.

MOTIVATIE

- Anderen helpen
- Complexiteit terugbrengen tot de essentie
- Verantwoord en duurzaam leven

MERKIDENTITEIT



Zeg gewoon waar het op staat

VIND LEUK / NIET LEUK

Problemen oplossen	Onnodige complexiteit & bureaucratie
Buiten zijn	Mensen die moeilijke woorden gebruiken om slim te lijken
Diepgaande, waardevolle gesprekken voeren	Dramatiseren van kleine problemen

OVER

Hij is de soort buurman die zijn tuinslang uitleent zonder het terug te verwachten, de vriend die je helpt verhuizen zonder enige mknak, en de collega die moeilijke problemen versimpelt. Hij is niet perfect, maar altijd aanwezig en klaar om te helpen. Dat is wat hem waardevol maakt.

PERSOONLIJKHEID



VAARDIGHEDEN



De stem van WAFE

Je weet nu wie Alex is en hebt al een klein kijkje gekregen in hoe hij klinkt. Zijn stem is de vertaling van onze merkpersoonlijkheid naar concrete communicatie. Of het nu gaat om e-mails, campagne of gesprek, deze 'tone of voice' zorgt ervoor dat WAFE altijd herkenbaar, menselijk en helder overkomt. De volgende 1.5 pagina zullen voorbeelden geven van hoe deze stem in de praktijk zou kunnen klinken.

Helder en nuchter

Geen wollige taal of jargon. We houden het duidelijk en begrijpelijk.

Behulpzaam en menselijk

We spreken alsof we tegenover je zitten, vriendelijk en zonder poespas.

Nieuwsgierig en betrokken

We stellen vragen, tonen interesse en denken mee.

Etisch en bewust

We zeggen waar het op staat, met respect en verantwoordelijkheid.

Hoi Alex,

Wat vervelend om te horen dat je systeem niet zoals behoren werkt. We hebben een aantal Toveniers in de regio zitten die we die kant op kunnen sturen om te kijken of het probleem op te lossen is. Wanneer zou dit uitkomen?

Met vriendelijke groet,
Alex van het WAFE team

Hoi Alex,
Goed nieuws en minder goed nieuws. Je bestelling is bijna klaar voor verzending, maar we lopen helaas een paar dagen achter.

Je krijgt een seintje zodra het onderweg is. We houden het transparant, zoals je van ons gewend bent.

Heb je vragen? Laat het weten, we reageren zo snel mogelijk.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Het WAFE team

Ook voor communicatie
met (potentiele) Toveniers

Beste hovenier,

WAFE is een innovatief systeem dat tuinieren makkelijker maakt. Slimme irrigatie, automatische aansturing van verlichting en energie, allemaal discreet geïntegreerd in het tuinontwerp.

Voor het aanleggen van ons systeem zoeken we verschillende hoveniers die een van onze gespecialiseerde 'Toveniers' zouden willen worden. Jij bent het gezicht van de installatie, wij zorgen voor:

Technische training (kort en duidelijk)
Alle benodigde onderdelen en schema's
Direct contact met onze supportlijn
Heldere vergoeding per installatie

Zo kunnen klanten rekenen op een goede start, en kunnen jij en je team slimme tuinen aanbieden zonder extra rompslomp.

Interesse? Reageer op deze mail of plan een korte intake met ons team.

Voor verdere informatie zijn wij ook altijd te bereiken!

Met vriendelijke groet,
Alex van het WAFE team
Partnerservice | hoveniers@WAFE.systems

M E R K I D E N T I T E I T

Hoi Alex,

Bedankt voor je aankoop van het WAFE systeem.
En goed nieuws: je hoeft zelf geen slang aan te sluiten of kabels te trekken.

Als jij wilt, laten we je nieuwe WAFE systeem aangelegd worden door een van onze gecertificeerde Toveniers! Zo weet je zeker dat alles goed ligt, water stroomt en je tuin klaar is voor slimme verzorging.
Jij kiest het moment, de Tovenier regelt de rest.

Binnenkort ontvang je via deze e-mail een voorstel voor een installatiemoment. Heb je toevallig al een favoriete tovenier, of wil je het toch liever zelf doen? Laat het weten en dan kijken we samen naar de mogelijkheden!

Slim tuinieren begint met slimme aanleg.

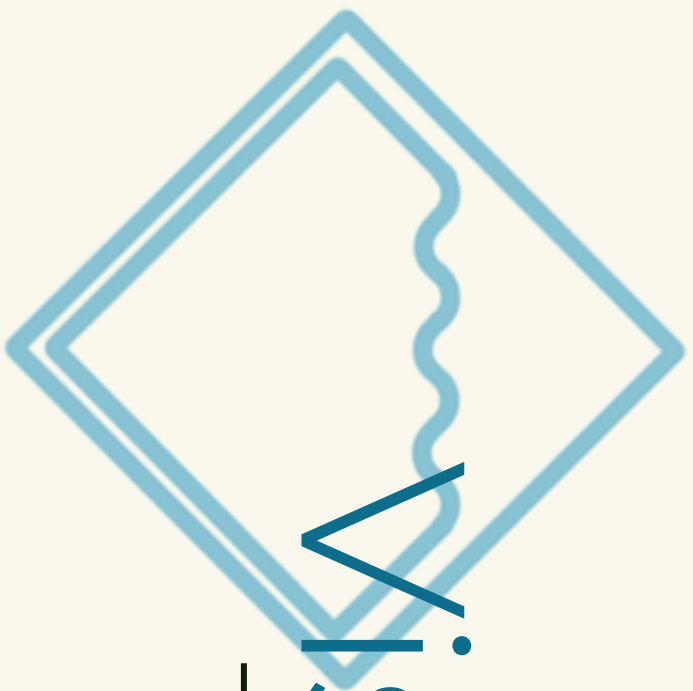
Met vriendelijke groeten,
Alex van het WAFE team.

Minder water verspillen? Je tuin regelt het zelf. Met WAFE geef je je planten precies wat ze nodig hebben, niet meer-niet minder.

Het voorjaar komt eraan. Tijd om je tuin slimmer te maken. Geen stress, geen moeite. Alleen een systeem dat werkt.

Slim tuinieren. Zonder gedoe.

P A G I N A 1 4



Visual



Typography

Logo

Segoe UI Black, Italic

Logo onderschrift

Corbel Light

Koptekst

Corbel Light

Hoofdttekst

Open Sans

Functionele, technische accenten
IBM Plex Mono

WAFE

Sustainable. Smart. Simple.

Titels, slogans

Hero-secties op website

Lopende tekst, tekstvakken

Productomschrijvingen

E-mail handtekeningen

Toelichtingen of instructies

Productlabels

Technische specificaties

Cijfergegevens

Logo

Het WAFE logo is ons belangrijkste herkenningspunt. Het straalt rust, helderheid en betrouwbaarheid uit, precies zoals we willen overkomen.

We gebruiken het logo op een consistente manier om de herkenbaarheid te waarborgen, met ruimte voor variatie waar nodig.

Naast een primair, secundair, en logo icoon zijn er ook instructies voor hoe wel en niet deze logo varianten te gebruiken. Volg deze instructies zorgvuldig, zodat onze visuele identiteit altijd herkenbaar en consistent blijft.



Het primaire logo wordt gebruikt waar mogelijk. Dit logo is horizontaal georiënteerd, wat de meest optimale orientatie is voor meeste gebruikssituaties.



Het secundaire logo is geschikt voor situaties waarin het horizontale logo niet past. Dit logo vult meer ruimte dan het primaire logo. In sommige situaties zal het mooier zal zijn deze variant te gebruiken.



Het logo icoon wordt gebruikt als er geen ruimte is voor een van de tekst logos. Ook kan deze gebruikt worden voor reliëfdrukken op producten.

Variaties

Om te zorgen dat het logo altijd goed gebruikt wordt zijn hier een aantal voorbeelden.

Het logo kan worden afgebeeld met de slogan: Sustainable. Smart. Simple. Dit moet altijd in het Engels en kan niet vertaald worden naar een andere taal. Ook kan beknopte uitleg over WAFE onder het logo geplaatst worden, deze tekst moet dan wel omschrijvend zijn en mag alleen informeren, niet adverteren. De laatste toegestane variant zijn indicaties van productlijn taken onder het paraplumerk.

De subtekst onder het logo moet altijd onder het logo passen en mag niet uitsteken. Als de subtekst niet past kan deze iets verkleind worden, maar mag nooit onder het WAFE logo uitsteken. Ook mag de subtekst niet gekanteld worden, deze moet strak en netjes onder het hoofd logo staan.

Ook zijn er verschillende kleur varianten. Waar mogelijk zal altijd de het originele logo gebruikt worden, maar voor het geval dat zijn er een aantal verschillende kleur-achtergrond combinaties van tevoren vastgelegd.

✓ Wel



✓ Wel



✓ Wel



✗ Niet





Kleurenpalet

Het kleurenpalet van WAFE is ontworpen om onze visuele identiteit krachtig en herkenbaar neer te zetten, en tegelijkertijd onze identiteit goed uit te stralen.

0 5 6 D 8 B

Logo



8 8 C 2 D 1



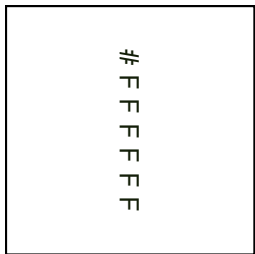
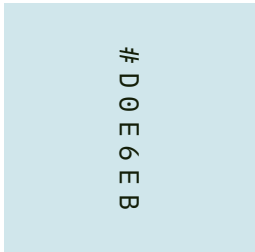
Het logo bestaat uit drie kleuren. De donkerste variant wordt gebruikt in de tekst naam, het lichtste als icoon, en een kleur die er tussenin valt voor de subtekst.

5 2 A 3 B 8



Het algemene kleurenpalet is iets uitgebreider en is toepasbaar op al onze visuele contactpunten. De verhoudingen tussen het kleurgebruik zijn vastgelegd om visuele balans te behouden.

Achtergrond



Primair



Secundair



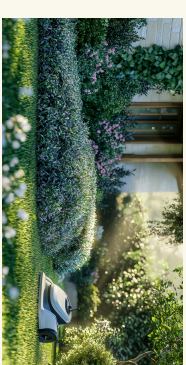
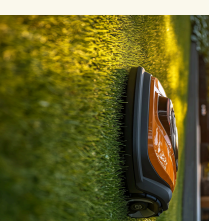
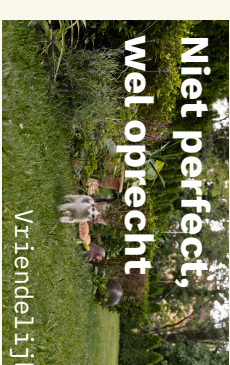
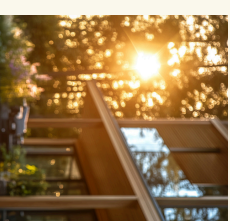
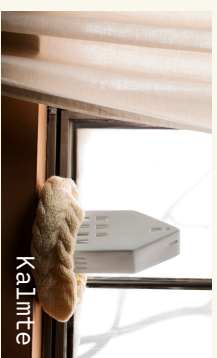
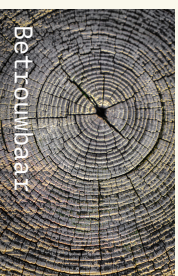
Tertiair

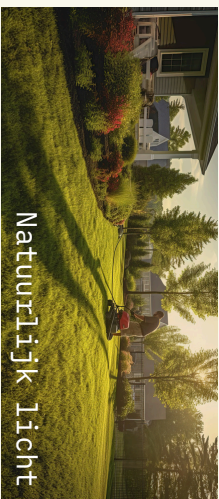
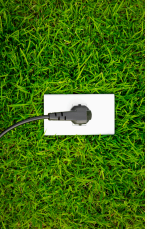


Kleur verhoudingen



Stijl





Menselijke interactie

Dit "moodboard" visualiseert de stijl van WAFE.

Het laat een gegronde, serene levenswijze zien, gekenmerkt door gemak en innovatie. Het geeft een gevoel van 's ochtends wakker worden met een kop koffie en van de zonsopgang genieten over een goed gemaaid gazon, met de robot grasmaaier zacht zoemend in de achtergrond.

In de afbeeldingen is een discrete harmonie tussen product (technologie) en natuur, wat de stijl van WAFE's product foto's goed omschrijft. De esthetiek is enigszins Scandinavisch geïnspireerd, maar met een warme, Hollandse nuchterheid.

Alles voelt licht, adement, en functioneel zonder overdaad. Er is een duidelijke voorkeur voor natuurlijke materialen, zachte texturen en gedempt kleurgebruik (geen felle, onnatuurlijke kleuren). Lichtinval is belangrijk in foto's om een sfeer van openheid en rust te creëren.

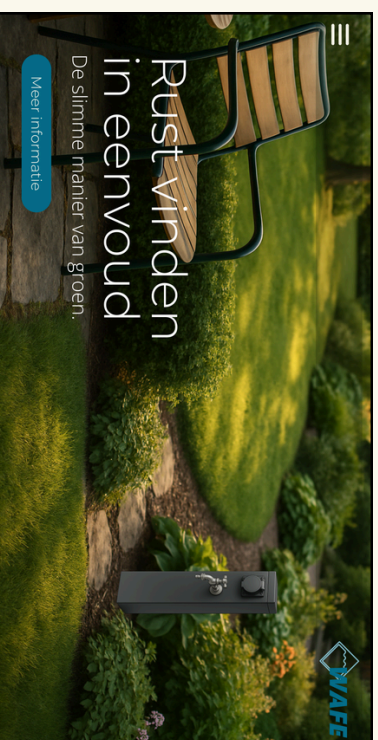
Alle afbeeldingen binnen WAFE moeten onbewerkt en eerlijk gepresenteerd worden.

Voorbeeld

In de website is alles opgebouwd met veel witruimte om rust en eenvoud uit te stralen. Alle tekst en afbeeldingen krijgen de ruimte om te spreken.

Belangrijk op de uiteindelijke webpaginas van WAFE is het gebruik van afbeeldingen. Product interacties en product contexten zullen informatief en esthetiek toevoegen aan de website. De techniek wordt op een subtiel manier gepresenteerd, niet als losstaande afbeeldingen, maar geïntegreerd in het leven van de consument.

Interacties binnen de website moeten traag en vriendelijk zijn: geen flitsende overgangen of schreeuwerige knoppen. De website wordt gekarakteriseerd door zachte animaties en duidelijke call-to-actions. Hierdoor voelt de website bijna als een wandeling door een goed onderhouden tuin.



Wij geloven in technologie die zich aanpast aan jou, niet andersom.
Slim tuinieren zonder gedoe. Sustainable. Smart. Simple.



Versterkende Eenvoud



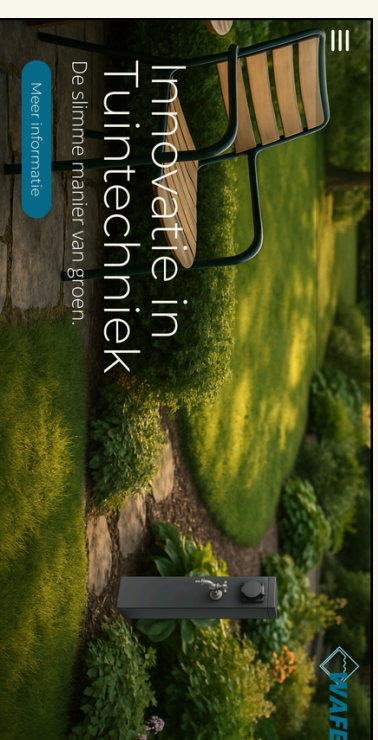
Mensgerichte Duurzaamheid



Slimme Integratie



Klaar om de rust in je tuin terug te brengen?



Wij geloven in technologie die zich aanpast aan jou, niet andersom.
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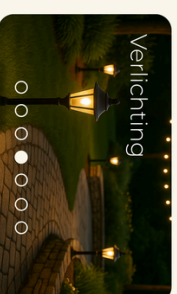
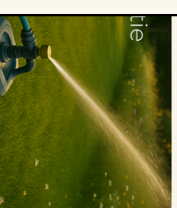
Versterkende Eenvoud



Mensgerichte Duurzaamheid



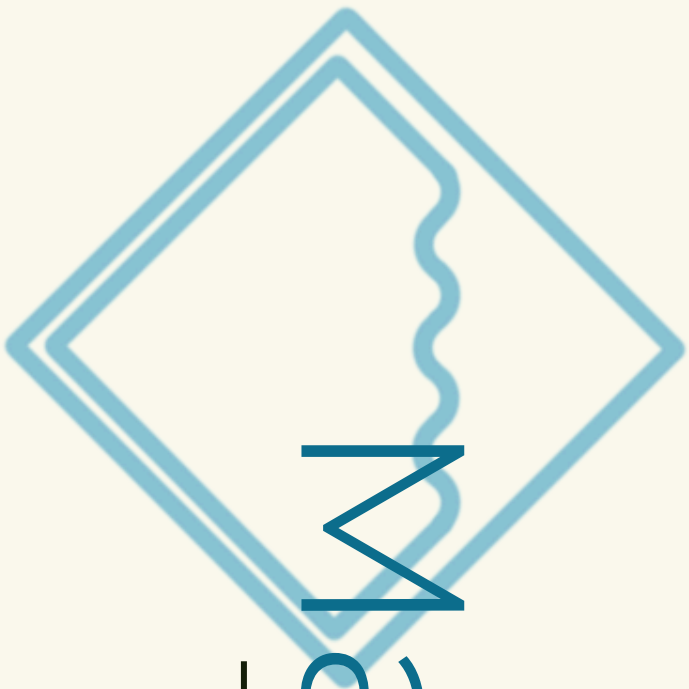
Slimme Integratie



Klaar om de rust in je tuin terug te brengen?



Management



Activisme



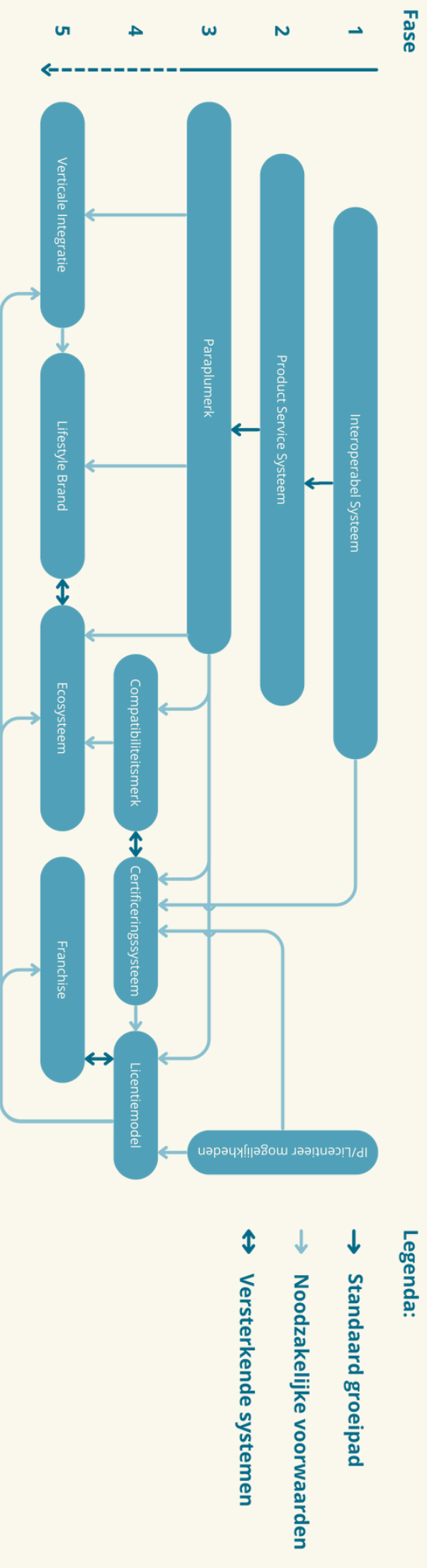
WAFE stelt zich sociaal op in de markt. Met verschillende samenwerkingen met gemeente tuinen en duurzame initiatieven geeft WAFE terug aan de omgeving.

Door op deze manier actief te zijn maakt WAFE zichzelf zichtbaar. Tegelijkertijd bouwen we zo aan een reputatie als een actief, open, betrouwbaar en hulpzaam merk.

Activisme is voor ons niet een marketing stunt. We willen graag helpen de wereld een stukje beter te maken.

Roadmap

Deze roadmap is wat wij handhaven om ons merk te laten groeien en ontwikkelen. Het laat onze intentie zien om een sterk Paraplumerk te worden, met potentiële doorontwikkel mogelijkheden afhankelijk van onze kansen in de toekomst. Het illustreert hoe groot we in de toekomst kunnen worden, iets moois om naar uit te kijken.



N. CO-CREATION FORM

Merkpersoonlijkheid.

Naam:

Leeftijd:

Geslacht:

Hobby's:

Uiterlijk en stijl:

Woonplaats:

Eetgewoonten:

Politieke voorkeuren:

Sociale betrokkenheid:

Sociale-media gedrag:

Kleurgebruik:

Designstijl:

Archetype:

De onschuldige

Gelukkig zijn
Optimisme, eenvoud, positiviteit
Eerlijk, puur en optimistisch
Bijv. Dove of Coca-Cola

De gewone man/vrouw

Erbij horen, verbondenheid
Eerlijkheid, nuchterheid, realisme
Aardig, empathisch, nuchter
Bijv. IKEA, eBay

De Held

De wereld verbeteren
Moed, doorzetten, competentie
Vastberaden, krachtig, inspirerend
Bijv. Nike, Adidas

De Schepper

Iets waardevols maken dat blijft bestaan
Creativiteit, verbeeldingskracht, innovatie
Artistiek, visionair, origineel
Bijv. Lego, Adobe

De ontdekker

Vrijheid en avontuur
Onafhankelijkheid, nieuwsgierigheid, authenticiteit
Avontuurlijk, rusteloos, onafhankelijk
Bijv. The North Face, Jeep

De wijze

De waarheid ontdekken, wijsheid delen
Intelligentie, kennis, kritisch denken
Analytisch, slim, betrouwbaar
Bijv. Google, BBC

De liefhebber

Emotioneel verbonden zijn met anderen
Passie, toewijding, schoonheid
Sensueel, warm, verleidelijk
Bijv. Chanel, Victoria's Secret

De nar

Plezier maken en mensen laten lachen
Speelsheid, spontaniteit, optimisme
Grappig, levendig, creatief
Bijv. M&M's, Ben & Jerry's

De heerser

Controle en orde creëren
Leiderschap, stabiliteit
Autoritair, verantwoord, verfijnd
Bijv. Mercedes-Benz, Rolex

De zorggever

Anderen helpen en beschermen
Zorgzaamheid, mededogen
Liefdevol, ondersteunend
Bijv. UNICEF, Johnson & Johnson

De Rebel

Verandering stimuleren
Vrijheid, opstandigheid
Gedurfd, rebels, charismatisch
Bijv. Harley-Davidson, Diesel

De Magiër

Dromen waarmaken
Visie, mystiek, verandering
Visionair, inspirerend
Bijv. Disney, Apple



Merkidentiteit



Fysiek:

Persoonlijkheid:

Relatie:

Cultuur:

Reflectie:

Zelfbeeld:

O. AI USAGE PERSONA

Prompt

give me a persona of a man named Alex, age 38 and with the following company values personified: Versterkende Eenvoud: Deze waarde maakt techniek vriendelijk. Minder complexiteit = meer plezier en eigenaarschap. Met minimalistische interfaces, duidelijke bediening en visuele feedback, en zonder jargon, verborgen kosten of ingewikkelde zelfstandige installatie. Rust en vertrouwen wordt uitgestraald door doordacht ontwerp.

Tuinieren wordt intuïtief, rustgevend, en zelfs leuk.

Eenvoud: Alles werkt intuïtief, zonder leercurve. Gebruikers hebben geen technische achtergrond nodig. Bijvoorbeeld toepasbaar als: simpele installatie in 3 stappen. Duidelijkheid: Geen verborgen kosten, ingewikkelde termen of verwarrende instellingen. Alles begrijpelijk, voor jong en oud. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: heldere prijstransparantie, begrijpelijke iconen en duidelijke UI. Ondersteuning: Altijd hulp beschikbaar, maar nooit opdringerig. Klanten voelen zich gehoord en geholpen. Bijvoorbeeld: een live chat met een werknemer die niet alleen maar probeert te verkopen, maar écht wilt helpen.

Mensgerichte Duurzaamheid: Zichtbaar ecologische impact met duurzaamheid als een gegeven, in plaats van een optie, met duurzame keuzes ingebouwd in het systeem. Door transparante werking en een toegankelijke, vriendelijke toon is er focus op persoonlijke ondersteuning. Deze waarde verbindt ethiek met gebruiksgemak. Duurzaamheid is geen compromis, maar een vanzelfsprekend onderdeel van de ervaring.

Een systeem dat mensen én de planeet ondersteunt, moeiteloos.

Helderheid: Duurzame keuzes worden eenvoudig en transparant gemaakt; geen greenwashing, geen complexiteit. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: duidelijk zichtbare en geteste informatie over het waterbesparingspercentage bij producten. Verbinding: De relatie tussen het bedrijf/merk en gebruikers is menselijk, ondersteunend en langdurig. Technologie is er ter versterking van de band tussen mens en natuur. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: empathische klantenservice. Verantwoordelijkheid: Zowel in materiaalgebruik als communicatie wordt er gekozen voor ethische en duurzame opties. Toegepast in bijvoorbeeld: Herbruikbare verpakkingen en eerlijk materialenbeleid.

Slimme Integratie: Deze waarde draait om slimme techniek zonder frictie en gedoe, maar wel met controle. De systemen en producten moeten naadloos bij elkaar aansluiten en modulair ontworpen zijn om met alle behoeften mee te kunnen groeien. En alles natuurlijk met betrouwbare prestaties en hands-on ondersteuning als dat gewild is.

Technologie die past bij jouw leven, jouw tuin, jouw tempo.

Betrouwbaarheid: Alles doet wat ze moeten doen, zonder gedoe of storingen. De techniek is stabiel en doordacht, niet experimenteel. Bijvoorbeeld zichtbaar in: Een wateringsysteem dat niet faalt tijdens een hittegolf. Flexibiliteit: Gebruikers kunnen zelf bepalen hoe eenvoudig of geavanceerd ze het systeem willen hebben. Niks is verplicht, alles is optioneel. Terug te zien in: Het modulaire design van de paal/hub, die zelf samengesteld kan worden naar de behoefte van de gebruiker en hun tuin.

Result Before Adjustment

Alex als persoon Alex is het type man dat je direct op je gemak stelt. Hij heeft een open, vriendelijke uitstraling en praat met een rustige, zelfverzekerde stem. Hij is geen luidruchtige prater, maar als hij iets zegt, luister je – omdat hij altijd iets zinnigs te zeggen heeft. Zijn humor is subtiel, droog soms, maar nooit ten koste van iemand anders.

Hij is nuchter en praktisch ingesteld. Als iets niet werkt, zoekt hij een oplossing zonder er een drama van te maken. Hij houdt niet van onnodige complexiteit en heeft een hekel aan mensen die moeilijke

woorden gebruiken om slim over te komen. "Zeg gewoon waar het op staat," is een van zijn favoriete uitspraken.

Alex is nieuwsgierig, maar niet op een opdringerige manier. Hij wil begrijpen hoe dingen werken, waarom mensen bepaalde keuzes maken en hoe hij anderen kan helpen zonder zichzelf op te dringen. Hij heeft een natuurlijke behoefte om te ondersteunen, maar zal nooit belerend zijn. Als je advies nodig hebt, geeft hij het, en als je liever zelf iets uitzoekt, laat hij je begaan.

Hij is betrouwbaar tot in de kern. Als Alex iets belooft, maakt hij het waar. Je kunt midden in de nacht bij hem aankloppen met een probleem en hij zal er voor je zijn – zonder dat hij er later iets voor terug verwacht. Hij heeft een sterk gevoel van verantwoordelijkheid, niet alleen voor zijn vrienden en familie, maar ook voor de wereld om hem heen.

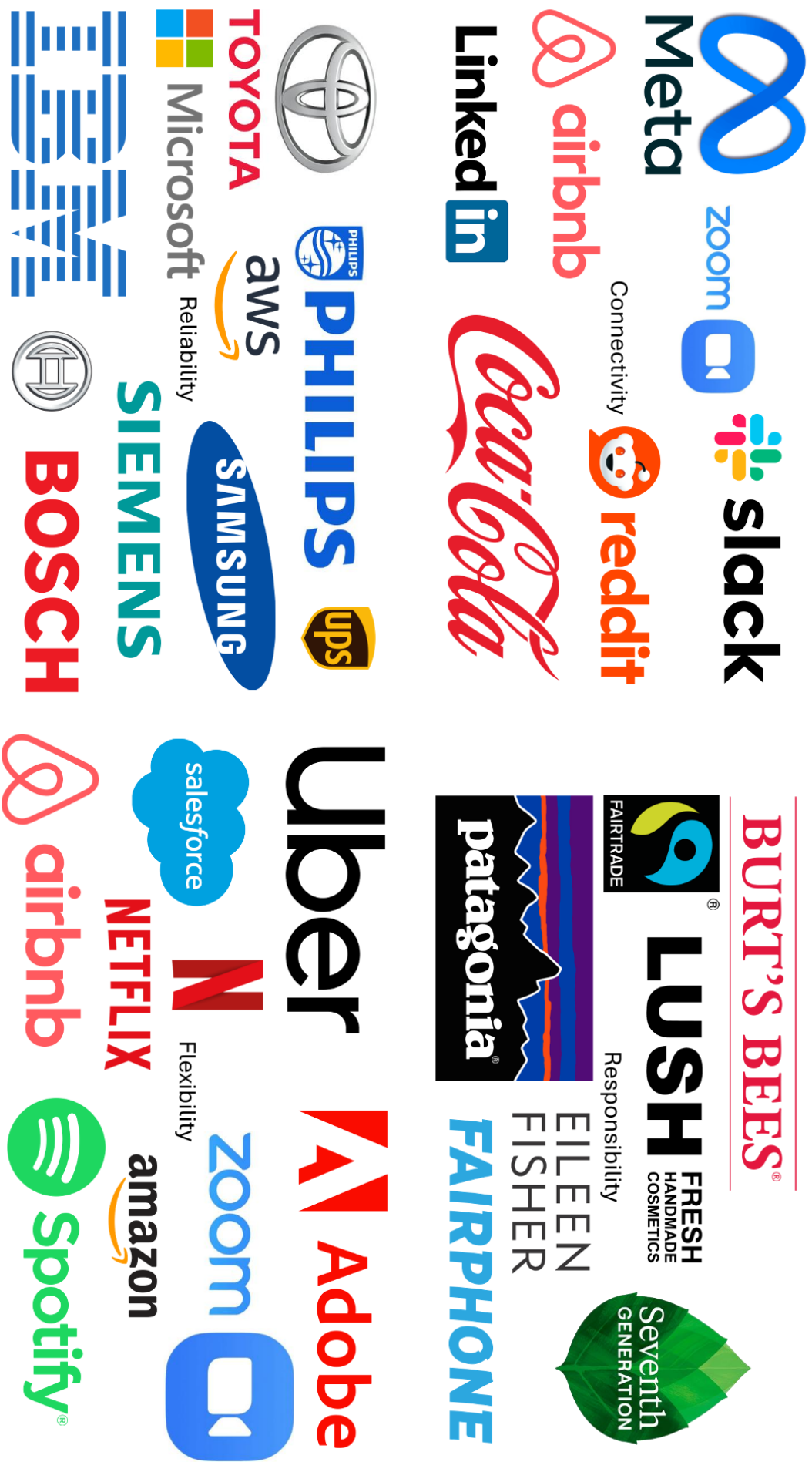
Duurzaamheid en ethiek zijn voor Alex vanzelfsprekend, maar hij draagt het niet als een badge of een manier om indruk te maken. Voor hem is het simpel: als je de mogelijkheid hebt om een goede keuze te maken – voor anderen, voor de planeet – waarom zou je dat dan niet doen? Hij wil anderen inspireren, maar zonder met een vingertje te wijzen.

Hij houdt van buiten zijn. Niet per se om extreme avonturen te beleven, maar gewoon om in de natuur te zijn, zijn hoofd leeg te maken en met zijn handen bezig te zijn. Misschien in zijn tuin, waar hij experimenteert met slimme irrigatiesystemen, of op een rustig terras met een kop koffie, waar hij een goed gesprek voert zonder constant op zijn telefoon te kijken.

Alex is de persoon bij wie je terecht komt als je een praktische, eerlijke mening wilt. De vriend die je helpt verhuizen zonder er een big deal van te maken. De buurman die je tuinslang mag lenen en waarbij je niet hoeft te twijfelen of je hem ooit moet terugbrengen. Hij is niet perfect, maar hij doet zijn best – en dat is precies wat hem zo prettig maakt om in je leven te hebben.

P. LOGO RESEARCH







Notion

SONOS

Casper

Simplicity



Dropbox



Apple

Google

Dove



shopify



salesforce



amazon



unicef

Comfort



patagonia

FAIRPHONE

EVERLANE

Transparency

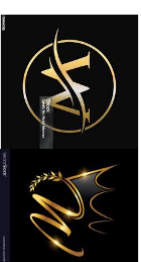
Zappos



headspace



SMART
TECHNOLOGIES



Inspiration
pretty logos



citydirect

SMART
TECHNOLOGIES



grid

jazz

païnda



TOBLERONE